





INTRODUCTORY LECTURES ON AESTHETICS

GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL was born in Stuttgart in 1770. In terms of cultural influence, he is the most important of modern philosophers, not only because of his relation to Marx and of the support his philosophy seemed to offer to European theories of nationalism and social democracy, but also because of his impact on the whole range of humanities. He published four major works in his lifetime: *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), *The Science of Logic* (1812–16), *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1817) and *The Philosophy of Right* (1821). But his reputation and influence also depend on his lectures, which were published posthumously by his friends and pupils. He was educated at the Tübingen theological seminary, where Hölderlin and Schelling were among his friends, and in 1801 he settled in Jena as an unsalaried lecturer. He completed *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in October 1806, on the night before the Battle of Jena, in which Napoleon's victory put an end to the Holy Roman Empire (and temporarily closed the University). Over the next ten years Hegel was for a short time editor of a Napoleonic newspaper in Bamberg, and then headmaster of the Nuremberg high school. In 1811 he married Marie von Tucher. In 1816 he became professor of philosophy at Heidelberg University, and in 1818 was appointed to the chair at Berlin. He died in 1831.

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GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

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Translated by

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Introduction

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was born in 1770 and died in 1831. In his lifetime German art reached heights that it had never attained before. Historians, critics and artists gained a new awareness of the art of the past. Aesthetics became a distinct and flourishing branch of philosophy. Philosophers assigned art a high position in the order of things, seeing it as one of humanity's supreme attainments, if not (as Hegel held) the self-revelation of God or of the 'absolute'. And yet Hegel seems to argue that art is coming to an end. It is this paradox that I hope, in this Introduction, to explain.

Art in Hegel's Germany

Hegel was born in Stuttgart, the capital of the duchy of Württemberg, one of the many small states into which Germany was then divided. Germany was at that time dispersed and oppressed, ruled for the most part by petty autocrats and subject to invasions by foreign armies. But political abasement was compensated for by intense cultural creativity. Until fairly late in the eighteenth century Germany had no literature comparable to those of France, England and Italy. By the time of Hegel's death it had a great national literature. The major force was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). He contributed to

virtually every sphere of literature – poetry, drama, the novel, autobiography, criticism – and (less successfully) to the natural sciences. Hegel knew Goethe well and often visited him in Weimar. The accomplishments of Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805) were equally wide-ranging: poems, plays and stories, as well as writings on art that had a great impact on Hegel. At the theological college at Tübingen, which Hegel attended from 1788 to 1793, he formed a close friendship with a third great writer, Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843), a lyric poet, novelist and dramatist whose career was cut short by madness in about 1803. But the greatest artistic achievements of the period were in music: Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Weber and Beethoven (born in the same year as Hegel, but never mentioned by him) were active in Hegel's lifetime.

Hegel's age was one of immense creativity; but it did not always seem so at the time. Not only Hegel, but Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775–1854) – another friend of Hegel's from the Tübingen college – saw the age as one of artistic poverty.¹ This belief had several sources. First, music, the one art in which modern Germany surpassed ancient Greece and every other nation and period, was in general not highly valued. Schopenhauer, in his *World as Will and Idea* of 1819, regarded music as the supreme art, but he was ignored until well after Hegel's death, when music was coming to be seen as the supreme art. The Romantics of the 1790s and 1800s – the Schlegels, Novalis, Tieck and Schelling – regarded literature or poetry as the supreme art. Hegel shared this view. He, like Schelling, had a special reason for devaluing music. Serious art has a theme and, at a deeper level, a meaning: it represents God or the absolute in a sensory form. But music as such refers to nothing outside

itself: it has no non-musical theme, and it does not express a vision of the world outside music. Hegel enjoyed opera, but he saw it as entertainment rather than serious art: the libretto is, in his view, rarely first-rate literature, and the score is little more than decoration. His opinion of purely instrumental music is lower still.

A second reason for the Germans' depreciation of their own artistic achievements was their growing familiarity with the art of other nations and epochs. From the mid-eighteenth century Winckelmann had revealed to them the splendours of Greek art, especially sculpture. Greek art was, in his view, the ideal, never subsequently surpassed. Much Greek literature was now translated for the first time: the *Odyssey*, for example, in 1781 and the *Iliad* in 1793. But Greek art was not the only beneficiary of German scholarship. August von Schlegel translated Shakespeare between 1797 and 1810, and also a fair amount of Spanish literature, especially Calderón. Ludwig Tieck, a scholar and critic of distinction, translated Shakespeare and also *Don Quixote*.² Schelling and Hegel greatly admired Dante's *Divine Comedy*. A consideration of the art of the past led some Germans to two conclusions. First, modern art is not superior to Greek art as art: Homer may have been equalled by Dante, Shakespeare or even Goethe, but he has never been excelled. German art in particular is not superior to the art of previous ages. It was disturbing for an age that saw history as progressive that supreme works of art appear near the beginning of its history. Second, the difference between Greek and German art is not simply a matter of aesthetic merit. Art dominated Greek life and thought. Homer developed a mythology that shaped not only later Greek art, but also their religion, morality and way of life. But art has no such position in

Germany. Goethe's Faust is not only less rich than the figures of Greek mythology, he is peripheral to German life and thought. Thus to the question 'Why has Goethe not been able to do for the Germans what Homer did for the Greeks?', the answer is not primarily that Goethe was a lesser talent, but that modern society has no place for a new Homer. Schelling and the Schlegels hoped for the creation of a modern epic, of a 'new mythology' that would present a total vision of the modern world and give rise not only to a higher type of art, but also to a new, aesthetic form of life. But Hegel had no such hope: mythology belongs to an age before the emergence of abstract thought.

A third reason why Schelling and Hegel,³ among others, underrated German art is their belief that in times of intense artistic creativity, such as Periclean Athens or Elizabethan England, there is little reflection on art. Thought about art, and philosophy of art, arise only when art is in decline. Reflective thought is inimical to artistic creation and impairs the art into which it intrudes. And Hegel's age was above all an age of criticism and of reflective thought about art.

Philosophy and Aesthetics

Philosophers have reflected on art from the time of Plato.⁴ But aesthetics were first given a name, and conceived as a distinct part of philosophy, in the mid-eighteenth century, by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten.⁵ However, the book that moved aesthetics to the centre of philosophy was not Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, but Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (1790).⁶ Kant was interested mainly in the subjective

judgement of taste, primarily the judgement that something, whether it be a natural object or an artefact, is beautiful. He had little interest in the creativity of the artist, in the 'content' of art – its theme or meaning – or in its history. But many of the theorists inspired, directly or indirectly, by Kant diverged from him in these respects. His most direct follower in aesthetics, Schiller, held for a time the chair of history at Jena and brought art into the domain of history. He distinguished the 'naïve' (i.e. spontaneous, immediate, unselfconscious) poetry of the Greeks and Shakespeare from the 'sentimental' (i.e. intellectual, self-conscious, self-critical) poetry of modernity.⁷ He saw art and aesthetic experience as the key to resolving the oppositions that fragment and alienate modern man, oppositions between duty and inclination, between theory and practice, and between different specialisms in the intellectual and practical division of labour.⁸

Other aestheticians investigated the history of art and, connected with this (since it is the content of art that most obviously changes over time), paid as much attention to the content of art as to its formal aspects. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) stressed that poetry springs from the religion, language and customs of a people, and explored the early 'folk-poetry' of the Germans. The Schlegels wrote and lectured on the literature and other arts of all periods.⁹ August Schlegel's lectures on 'fine literature and art' (1801–4) were used by Schelling as a source of empirical material for his own lectures on the philosophy of art, delivered at Jena in the winter of 1802–3.¹⁰ Schelling had argued, in his *System of Transcendental Idealism* of 1800, that art is the pinnacle of philosophy, that it is in fact superior to

philosophy itself, since it represents in an objective form the union of mind, or spirit, and nature: the artist's creativity combines the necessity of nature and the freedom of spirit. In his lectures he attempted a 'historical construction' of both the content and the forms of art. Art, in his view, is equal to philosophy, if no longer its superior, in its power to disclose the 'absolute', the fundamental nature of the world.

Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics* were not, then, an isolated phenomenon. They presupposed the work of art historians, of critics, and of other philosophers. They are the culmination of a tradition that assigned immense importance to art in the historical advance of mankind and of his awareness of the world and his place in it.

Hegel's Aesthetics

In 1801 Hegel became a lecturer at the university of Jena, where the most precocious Schelling was already professor of philosophy. In his lectures at Jena, Hegel began to work out the form of his mature philosophical system. The system contains three main parts: first, logic, which examines the general categories involved in our thought about the world and (in Hegel's view) in the world itself; second, philosophy of nature, which presents the main phases of the natural world, beginning with space and ending with the animal organism; and third, philosophy of mind or spirit (*Geist*). The philosophy of spirit is again divided into three parts, implicitly in the Jena lectures, but explicitly in the later *Encyclopaedia*.¹¹ The parts deal with subjective spirit, i.e. roughly individual psychology; objective spirit, i.e. morality, social and economic institutions, the state, and political

history; and absolute spirit, i.e. art, religion and philosophy. Art thus has a high position in Hegel's system, but a position lower than that of religion and philosophy. The triad art–religion–science (i.e. philosophy) first appears in the 1805–6 Jena lectures on philosophy of spirit.¹² It appears in his first major work, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* of 1807,¹³ in a truncated form: art is there consigned to the second stage of religion, the 'religion of art' (i.e. Greek religion), in contrast to the 'natural religion' that precedes it and the 'revealed religion' (i.e. Christianity) that follows it. It re-emerges in a final form in the *Encyclopaedia*.

That art, religion and philosophy are treated in this order does not mean that they appear in historical succession, that art is finished before religion appears and philosophy begins only when the development of religion is complete. For much of history, art, religion and philosophy develop in tandem. Hegel implies, however, that art was the first form of absolute spirit to emerge, and that in so far as early peoples, such as the Egyptians, had a religion, they could express it to any degree of adequacy only in art, not in religious dogmas independent of art, and still less in philosophical thought. He also believed that art is inferior to religion, and still more so to philosophy.

Hegel left Jena in 1807 and went to Bamberg to edit a pro-Napoleonic newspaper. In 1808 he became headmaster of a gymnasium in Nuremberg, where he lectured on philosophy to the pupils and completed his second major work, the *Science of Logic* (1812–16),¹⁴ as well as doing preparatory work for the *Encyclopaedia*. In 1816 he became professor at Heidelberg, and there he began to prepare lectures on aesthetics. In 1818 he was appointed to the chair of

philosophy at Berlin and remained there until his death in 1831. At Berlin he lectured on aesthetics in the winter of 1820–21, in the summers of 1823 and 1826, and in the winter of 1828–9. The lectures were edited by H. G. Hotho in 1835, and with revisions in 1842, for the posthumous edition of Hegel's collected works. Hotho used Hegel's notes and students' transcripts for the courses of 1823, 1826 and 1828–9. It is the Introduction to these lectures that is translated in this volume.

Art, the Absolute and Spirit

Art, in Hegel's view, portrays the human spirit, at first in a bodily form, later in a more spiritual form. Art reveals the absolute. It represents the absolute as spirit. And it reveals or embodies the Idea. What is the significance of these claims, and how do they cohere with each other?

Hegel begins with a simple, idealized account of what men were when they had no art, religion or conceptual thought. In such a condition, man perceives external objects and has desires for them, desires which he satisfies by consuming (e.g. eating) objects. At this stage, man views the world as a merely 'sensuous' world, as no more than a collection of individual entities to be perceived and consumed. Correspondingly, man himself is a merely sensuous creature: he is no more than a series of sense-perceptions and of sensuous, or physical desires and satisfactions. The state of man's mind, or the elementary phase of mind which he so far possesses, conforms precisely to the state of the world as he so far views it. One might say that, for man at this stage, the absolute, the essence of the world or the world as it is in

itself, is simply a collection of perceptibles and consumables. But there is little point in speaking in this way, since no distinction can be drawn as yet between the absolute and its appearances, between the world as it is in itself and the world as it presents itself to us. The world, and man himself, are, at this stage, simply what they seem to be. (To deny that there is an absolute is seen by Hegel as little more than a recommendation that we revert to this exclusively sensory and appetitive condition.)

Man cannot remain in this condition, if he is a man rather than an animal. For his essential nature is to think: to think about the world, about himself, about the relationship between himself and the world, and indeed about his own thinking. But he cannot think directly in non-sensory, conceptual terms, any more than one can do pure arithmetic before one has done such things as count one's own fingers. He can only think in terms of the sensuous material available to him and by manipulating and shaping material objects. Suppose, for example, that he carves a piece of wood into the shape of a bison. This liberates him from his sensuous condition in several respects: he no longer attempts to eat the wood; he shapes it and, once he has shaped it, he does not attempt to chase or eat the bison he has made, but contemplates it and offers it for the contemplation of others. He thus distances himself from sensuous desires and becomes capable of disinterested contemplation of the world as well as of appetitive consumption. His ability to restrain his desires enables him to see himself as more than a series of desires. Moreover, while the bison that he hunts and eats is a particular, individual bison, his carving is likely to represent, not some particular bison, but all and any of the bison that he has encountered and even of those that he has

not yet encountered. As an artist, he is concerned not with this or that particular bison, but with the bison in general or the bison as a 'universal'. His carving expresses, and thereby makes determinate, his knowledge of the physical contours and characteristic stances of the bison as such, independently of the peculiarities of the individual bison he has encountered and of the features of them that his desires drew to his special attention. (Thought and knowledge are, in Hegel's view, not fully formed until we express them.) Thus man now views the world otherwise than previously. It is for him no longer simply a collection of perceptible and consumable individuals. It contains types of thing, whose typical features transcend our fleeting perceptual encounters with them and our fleeting desires for them. The merely sensuous features of the world are now downgraded in favour of its general features. Correspondingly, man's merely sensuous features, his perceptions and desires, are downgraded in favour of his capacity to generalize, or at least to produce images of a general type.

Significant works of art and artists are, for the most part, more complex than this bison and its producer. But the example illustrates one central strand in Hegel's argument, namely, that there is a symmetry between the mind of the artist and the absolute, what he takes to be the essence or meaning of the world. The absolute as the artist presents it lies at a depth below the sensuous surface of the world corresponding to the depth at which the mind of the artist (and, to a lesser degree, of his audience) lies below his physical and sensuous exterior, that aspect of him that is in immediate contact with the external world. But Hegel does not share the view (the main representative of which, for him, is Kant) that the absolute, and more generally the

world as we view it, consists in no more than the projection of our own thoughts or categories on to an intrinsically indeterminate reality. Nor does he believe that the absolute is accessible and on full display to any mind, however ill-equipped or undeveloped. Spiritual depth is needed to fathom the depths of the world.

The Absolute as Spirit

The absolute, then, as portrayed in a given period, corresponds to the stage of development attained by the human spirit in that period. But why does it follow that art should especially portray human beings? Or that the absolute should be represented as spiritual, rather than as a bison or a stone?¹⁵ In the course of his *Introduction*, as well as his other writings, Hegel suggests a variety of answers to these questions:

(i) The bison-carver, whom we considered above, may view the bison as the centre of the world or as, in some sense, the absolute. But he also conceives the world as containing a variety of general types of entity, of which the bison is the most important, but not the only, example. These general types are the external counterparts of the general thoughts or images in the mind of the artist. But they correspond to nothing in the mind of the bison. The bison has no general thoughts or images, and is thus not capable of conceiving the world in the way that the bison-carver does. Thus a bison, realistically portrayed, does not provide an adequate model for the world as it is implicitly conceived by the bison-producer. If any entity *within* the world is to be taken as the model for the absolute, it should be the human mind, since

only a thinking mind can accommodate the thoughts that, in Hegel's view, underlie and structure the phenomenal world. In his *Logic*, Hegel gives a philosophical account of the complex system of thoughts that forms the basis both of the mind and of the world. Religion, in his view, provides a pictorial counterpart to this system in God the Father.¹⁶

(ii) The bison-producer conceives the world as an inner absolute that manifests itself outwardly. But here again the bison is an inadequate model. If we regard the outer as the body of the bison and its inner as its mental life, its outer is relatively inexpressive and suggests that it has no inner life comparable in complexity to that of a human being. If, by contrast, we view the inner absolute as the bison as such and its outer manifestation as the bison's external conduct, a bison's conduct is simple and unproductive in comparison with a human being's. It cannot produce a carving of a man or of a bison, and, unless its creative powers are increased beyond recognition, it can do nothing that approaches the creation of a world. If we seek some entity within the world as a model or symbol for the origin, the ground or simply the inner depth of the world, the human being again seems the obvious choice.

(iii) Men are superior to bison and to other natural entities. Men hunt, domesticate, cook and eat other animals, and, even if they are occasionally gored and eaten by other animals, they have the advantage of being able to draw pictures and carve models of them and thus of understanding them and putting them in their conceptual place. Man is thus, in Hegel's view, the highest manifestation of the absolute. This suggests that art should pay more attention to man than to other entities and that, if the artist wishes to represent the absolute in terms of one of its finite

manifestations, man is the obvious choice. But Hegel goes further. The absolute is not a static, underlying essence, whose manifestations are inessential to it – as God is sometimes conceived as fully formed independently of his creation and as then choosing to create a world from pure beneficence. The absolute's manifestations are essential to it, and it develops along with them. Conversely, man's superiority to other entities is one of kind, not simply of degree. Man surveys the whole world and plumbs its depths, gradually becoming aware of the absolute itself. Thus man and his cognitive and practical activities are not simply a manifestation of the absolute, but the highest phase of the absolute, the phase in which the absolute becomes self-conscious and 'returns to itself' out of the brute objectivity of nature. (The religious counterpart is, in Hegel's view, the Holy Spirit.)

This has three implications. First, in portraying man and his deeds, art portrays the absolute itself in its highest phase. Second, since the relation between the absolute, conceived as the inner depth of the world, and man is the relation between the absolute in itself and its consciousness of itself, and since, among entities within the world, only man is self-conscious, the absolute as a whole, and not simply in its explicitly human phase, is seen on the model of a human being. Third, since art is one of the main ways in which man plumbs the depths of the world, art is not only a portrayal of the absolute, but a phase of the absolute's developing consciousness of itself. Art does not simply reveal God: it is one of the ways in which God reveals, and thus actualizes, himself.

(iv) The absolute becomes self-conscious in man's cognitive and practical activities. But man's central motive for such

activities is, in Hegel's view, to become self-conscious himself, and, since the absolute in this phase is not distinct from man, the absolute becomes self-conscious only in the self-consciousness of man. Becoming self-conscious and becoming aware of other things are not two distinct activities. Self-consciousness cannot be attained solely by focusing on oneself, since if one is not yet self-conscious one does not know what to focus on. It is acquired by coming to grips with what is, *prima facie*, distinct from oneself. One sees oneself, as it were, reflected off the world as off a mirror.¹⁷ This involves practical activity as well as contemplation. The infant makes sense of itself at the same time as it makes sense of its environment, in part by manipulating objects in its environment and coming to see it as a field for its activities. The bison-producer, as we have seen, has gone some way in acquiring self-consciousness. The world, as he conceives it, is relatively intelligible and responsive to his activities. It is modelled on a creature which, though different from himself, is familiar to him and plays an important and beneficial part in his life. Conversely, he acquires implicit awareness of his generalizing, contemplative and creative powers, as well as of his life as a hunter. But his explicit awareness of himself and of his place in the world is as yet deficient. To remedy its defects, he needs to portray men, as well as bison. Moreover, it is not enough to portray men alongside bison, as if men and bison were simply two co-ordinate types of entity. His portrayals of men must convey man's central position in the universe, a position from which he produces unreciprocated portrayals of other things. And finally, his representation of the absolute should not only be compatible with man's central position among the manifestations of the

absolute: it should view the absolute as an appropriate counterpart to man himself. To see the absolute as a bison is, in Hegel's view, as disorienting as seeing a bison when one looks in the mirror.

Concept and Idea

Hegel uses both 'concept'¹⁸ and 'Idea'¹⁹ in apparently diverse ways. But the Idea, for him, is strictly the concept together with the reality of the concept. He often illustrates this with the case of a man: his soul is the concept, his body is the reality, and the whole man is the Idea. Only certain types of entity are seen in this way. A man, unlike a stone, is, firstly, an intimately unified, yet differentiated, whole, and, secondly, has an inner and an outer aspect between which there is nevertheless a close correspondence, such that (ideally at least) every feature of his soul is expressed in the structure and attitudes of his body, and, conversely, every feature of his body expresses some feature of his soul.²⁰ A work of art is, in Hegel's view, similar in these respects to an ideal human body. It too is a tightly unified, articulated whole. Like a man, it arises not by the combining of parts that have arisen separately and piecemeal, but by the realization of the concept or conception of the work, which determines, ideally at least, every detail of the work. Every aspect of the concept finds expression in some aspect of the work, and, conversely, every aspect of the work expresses some aspect of its concept. Thus Hegel tends to say not only that a work of art expresses the Idea, but that it is an Idea. In these cases, Hegel mainly stresses the coexistence of the concept and its reality, but another of his illustrations

implies that the concept precedes and engenders its reality: the concept is encoded in an acorn, it acquires reality in the growth of the tree, and is realized in the Idea, the fully grown oak.²¹ The concept involves, firstly, a plan which prescribes the stages of the tree's growth, as well as its mature form, and, secondly, a drive to realize itself, in a suitable environment. Hegel applies this model beyond the realm of biology. The concept of art or beauty, for example, realizes itself over time in stages that are broadly, though not in detail, determined by the concept itself.

It is not only entities within the universe that are Ideas. The universe as a whole is, in Hegel's view, an Idea, the unity of a concept and its reality. In his *Logiche* attempts to unravel the concept or conceptual system that underlies the world as a whole, and also to explain its tendency to realize itself in nature and in spirit. Nature embodies the concept in an external and implicit fashion. Nature does not, in Hegel's view, have a history or evolve: its changes are cyclical and repetitive. Nor does nature have a beginning in time.²² Spirit or man also embodies the concept, at a higher level, but in this case the concept is realized gradually over the millennia.²³ This occurs in 'objective spirit', most obviously in 'world history', and, contemporaneously, in 'absolute spirit', the art, religion and philosophy in which man becomes aware, with increasing explicitness, of the nature of the universe and of his position in it, and thus 'spiritualizes' the non-human world. Man's awareness of the nature of the universe is itself the culminating phase of the world-process. It is thus the final realization of the concept and constitutes the absolute Idea. (A partial analogy is the production, by the full-grown oak, of new acorns which contain encoded in them the nature of the oak tree and the plan of its

development.)

Art, in Hegel's view, involves the concept–reality–Idea schema in several ways. A work of art is itself an Idea, an articulated whole that realizes its concept. It often portrays the human figure, which is again an Idea. It forms a part of the Idea of beauty, the realization of the concept of beauty in individual works.²⁴ It reveals the absolute Idea, the self-realizing nature of the world. But in revealing the absolute, art helps to *realize* the absolute and is thus a phase of the absolute Idea.

Art and Religion

Much of the art that Hegel considers is religious art, and the art that he admired most – archaic and classical²⁵ Greek art – pertained, in one way or another, to the religious sphere. But he does not believe that all serious art is explicitly religious. First, Greek art and religion are a special case. The Greek gods are relatively close to the sensory surface of things that forms the material of art, both because they are closely intertwined with human life and natural phenomena, and because they can readily be portrayed in a human form. But the Christian god is not persistently or closely involved in human affairs, and – apart from Christ himself – is not readily portrayed in a sensory form. Hence much serious art of the Christian era, such as Shakespeare, has no explicit religious significance. Second, the essence or nature of anything essentially manifests itself. It is only an essence in virtue of its manifestation, and the manifestation is as essential as the essence. Electricity essentially manifests itself in such phenomena as lightning, and God essentially

manifests himself in a world and in rational beings whose thoughts and activities (including art) constitute his self-consciousness.²⁶ Thus to portray the absolute or the essence of the world is not just to portray gods or God: it is also to portray the world and human affairs. Much modern art, in Hegel's view, reveals the divine essence of the world by simply representing worldly things and events in a certain way, with no explicit reference to religion. It can do this because to see the world as it is in essence is not, in Hegel's view, simply to see it as consisting of sensory phenomena, on the one hand, and, on the other, of divinities who control and manipulate them. There are a variety of intermediate factors. For example, Greek tragedy presents the relatively abstract forces and values – love, revenge, family, state, etc. – that motivate human actions, and portrays, not individual men in all their diversity and imperfection, but idealized characters who represent these forces and values.²⁷ To do this is to reveal, in part at least, the absolute. Hegel is nevertheless uneasy about the apparently secular character of modern art. He attempts to accommodate it within an overarching religious view of art. Architecture, he argues, provides the temple of the god; sculpture provides the god who is to dwell in the temple; and the modern arts of painting, music and poetry portray the 'community' that worships the god.²⁸

Art and History

Since art expresses man's fundamental beliefs about the world and himself, art has a history that develops, not haphazardly, but in some sense rationally, and the stages of

this development, in their broad outlines, are prefigured and predetermined by the concept of art.²⁹ But art does not develop in the way that the natural sciences develop, presenting progressively more adequate views of an essentially unchanging reality, such as the planetary system. Shakespeare does not present a better account than Homer of a static reality, since the central element in reality – man and the human world – has changed between the times of Homer and Shakespeare. It has changed as a result partly of art itself, but partly also of religious and other historical developments. It has changed in particular because, in becoming conscious of himself, man alters himself. Homer and Shakespeare present views of different stages of the world-process.

It might be objected that the Homeric world-view is simply false, and that this, in view of Homer's supreme aesthetic merit, sheds doubt on the claim that art essentially reveals the absolute. But to say that a world-view is false is, in Hegel's view, not to say that it fails to correspond to unvarnished reality – to which we have no access except by way of art, religion, and science or philosophy – but to assess it unfavourably, firstly, with respect to its internal coherence and, secondly, in comparison with a higher world-view. (These two standards are connected in that a world-view gives way to another world-view because of its internal incoherence or contradictions.) The Homeric world-view was relatively coherent and self-contained. If it eventually gave way to another world-view, this was not because of any obvious flaw that could have been spotted at the time of its emergence and dominance, but because it ceased to be an appropriate vehicle for the enhanced human self-consciousness, to which the Homeric world-view, along with

other factors, eventually gave rise. Compared with a higher religion, notably Christianity, the Homeric world-view is relatively false, presenting an intellectually meagre, if aesthetically satisfying, picture of the world and man. Compared with a scientific account of the world, the Homeric world-view is also relatively false, presenting a fanciful, pictorial view of the world, not a prosaic, conceptual account. But neither Christianity nor prosaic science could have been produced or understood by adherents of the Homeric world-view. They lacked the spiritual depth embodied in, and portrayed by, Christianity, and they had not disentwined conceptual thought from sensory imagery to the degree required for science. The Homeric world-view was thus the appropriate one for its time, and was the 'truth' of its age. It was also a necessary stage on the route to what is true in a stronger sense: Lutheran Christianity and modern science.

The Homeric world-view, then, is relatively false, not because it gives an inadequate account of man and the world as they were at the time of its emergence and dominance, but rather because at that time the world and man were themselves relatively undeveloped and 'false'. But even if the Homeric world-view is false only in this sense, this is still sufficient to cast doubt on the relationship between aesthetic merit and truth. Should we say that, since Goethe's world-view is truer (i.e. corresponds to, and appropriately portrays, a higher phase of the 'world-spirit') than Homer's, Goethe's poems are better than Homer's? Or should we say that Homer's poems are at least the equal of Goethe's, despite their inferior truth-value? Hegel equivocates on this question. His dominant view is that Greek art is at least equal, and probably superior, to later

art in aesthetic merit, since the message that it attempts to convey, though less true than e.g. Christianity, is better suited to expression in art. But occasionally he suggests that the merit of art depends solely on the merit of its 'content'.³⁰

Art and Philosophy

Art reveals the absolute, and so, in their different ways, do religion and philosophy. Art thus expresses the same 'content'³¹ as religion and philosophy, but in a different 'form'. It expresses its content in a sensory form, while religion does so in the form of pictorial imagery (*Vorstellung*) and philosophy in the form of conceptual thought. Philosophy is higher than art, both because conceptual thought is the essence of man and because philosophy has a wider range. Philosophy can speak about art, but art cannot speak in any detail about philosophy, unless it is tending to become philosophy, and this, in Hegel's view, entails its degeneration as art.³² Thus, despite its high import, art is at risk of being seen as second-rate philosophy, dispensable in favour of philosophy, unless we are too primitive to produce philosophy or unable to appreciate it without adornment. On the other hand, Hegel insists that art is an end in itself, not a means to some further end (such as morality) and thus potentially replaceable by other means to the same end.

How can Hegel maintain *both* that art has the same content as philosophy *and* that it is an end in itself not replaceable by philosophy? The answer is twofold. First, although the histories of art and philosophy are contemporaneous for much of their course, they do not run in exact parallel. In the

period of the emergence and dominance of the Homeric world-view, philosophy was meagre and undeveloped, and it could not have provided an adequate medium for the expression of that world-view. It is only later that philosophy developed sufficiently to become an appropriate vehicle for the world-view of its time. Thus if art is replaceable by philosophy, it is so only in fairly recent times, not at all stages of its history. Second, the content of something, and also its end or purpose, can be specified in different ways. The purpose or function of sight, for example, may be said to be to reveal external objects, and its content to be external objects. Similarly, the purpose of touch is to reveal external objects, and external objects make up its content. On this account, the purpose and the content of sight and of touch are the same. On the other hand, the content of sight may be specified as the visible aspects of objects, and its purpose as revealing these visible aspects. Correspondingly, the content of touch is the tangible aspects of things, and its purpose is to reveal them. On this account, sight and touch differ in purpose and content. Analogously, the content and purpose of art and philosophy, specified in one way, are the same: their content is the absolute, and their purpose is to reveal it. But specified in another way, they differ: the content of art is a sensory vision of the absolute, and its purpose is to express such a vision; while the content of philosophy is a conceptual account of the absolute and its purpose is to give such an account. Thus art and philosophy may be said to have the same content, since both reveal the absolute; but art is an irreplaceable end in itself, since, unlike philosophy, it expresses a sensory vision of the absolute.

On this account art is both important, in that it reveals the

absolute, and unique, in that it reveals it in a sensory way. But art is still in a precarious position, once philosophy (or a religion independent of art) has found its strength. For art is important and unique in different respects, and we can ask: Is art important in that respect in which it differs from philosophy, or could we cease, without loss, to portray the absolute in a *sensory* form? Does art disclose crucial aspects of e.g. Christianity that theology and philosophy cannot reveal? Hegel does not pose, or answer, these questions unequivocally, but he tends to suggest that as philosophy and religion advance, the sensory aspects of the world, and hence the artistic expression of it, become less important.

The Rise and Fall of Art

Art reveals the absolute in a sensory form. Thus it expresses a message in a sensory medium. Messages may be expressed badly owing not only to the incompetence of the communicator, but to the nature of the message, the medium or both. A message may be too indeterminate to be expressed adequately, like a vague feeling that one cannot put into words – or into pictures. Or a message may be too complex for a given medium, as when one cannot put into words exactly what a person looks like, though one might put it into paint. Adequate expression is an essential factor in aesthetic merit. But judged by its expressive adequacy, art, in its history, takes a different course from religion and philosophy. Religion and philosophy, in Hegel's view, improve as they advance from their beginnings in the East, and reach their peak in modern times. By contrast, art reaches its peak in Greece and then declines as it approaches modern times. Pre-Greek ('symbolic') art cannot express its

message adequately, since the message is too indeterminate. Post-Greek, primarily Christian ('romantic') art cannot express its message adequately, since the message is too deep and complex for a sensory medium. It is only in Greek ('classical') art that the message (or 'content') and the medium (or 'form') fully coincide and that the message can be adequately expressed in art. To use an analogy common in Hegel's day, pre-Greek art is the infant, whose undeveloped body and ill-coordinated movements correspond to, but do not adequately express, his undeveloped, indeterminate inner life; romantic art is the old man, whose accumulated wisdom is only inadequately expressed in his frail body; but Greek art is the youth whose body and movements perfectly express his developed, but still relatively superficial, inner life.

The Rise of Philosophy

In Greek art, form and content are in ideal harmony. Hegel associates this with the absence, in archaic and classical Greece, of any developed philosophy or theological dogma. The Greek artist did not derive his message from religion or philosophy, nor was his work open to religious or philosophical criticism. Art itself was the primary authority on his message and his expression of it.

Hegel neglects, in this context, a significant fact. From the sixth century BC, when important religious art was still being produced, philosophers such as Xenophanes, and later Plato, criticized Homer's and other artists' portrayals of the gods. If Hegel had taken note of this, he might have developed and adopted a view that he suggests in passing later in his

lectures, namely that periods of artistic creativity are regularly followed by periods of decline induced by philosophical reflection.³³ One reason for his oversight is that he fails clearly to distinguish four distinct questions that may be asked of a work, or a type, of art:

1. Does it display an intrinsic harmony that suggests that its form is wholly appropriate to its content? Or does its internal discord raise questions that it does not answer?
2. Does it express the highest beliefs of its age?
3. Is it the final authority on its message, or is it open to assessment by religion and philosophy?
4. Does it derive its message from a religion or philosophy outside of art?

These are distinct questions. A work may be internally harmonious, but not attempt to express the highest beliefs of the age. A work may be criticized by religion and philosophy, and yet remain internally harmonious, especially if it was produced much earlier. It may express the highest beliefs of its age, even though it is subject to criticism by religion and philosophy, if, for example, religion and philosophy find it adequate or if they are too undeveloped to present a coherent body of alternative beliefs. Conversely, the failure of Egyptian art to express, harmoniously and adequately, the highest beliefs of the age had little to do with its exposure to religious assessment or the derivation of its message from religion: its message was unfit for adequate expression in any medium.

Nevertheless, Hegel links these questions by presenting a

plausible picture of the decline of art. It falls into three broad phases. First, even if art remains internally harmonious and expresses adequately the highest beliefs of its age, the rise of independent religion and philosophy affects its status and the way in which we view it. Art is no longer the final authority on the beliefs of the age. It no longer provokes an appropriate aesthetic response. Contaminated by religion and philosophy, the audience tends to think about it conceptually rather than to view it simply as art. Even our view of Greek art is infected by modern philosophy. Hegel believed that he and his contemporaries had acquired a good appreciation of Greek art. But this was due to the hard work of Winckelmann and other theorists: the German could not naively appreciate Homer in the way that the Greek did.

Second, once religion and philosophy become independent of art, they develop their own view of the absolute. Since, unlike art, they are not confined to sensory media, their view of the absolute tends to transcend the resources of adequate artistic expression. The inner depth of the Christian god and of Christian man eludes full expression in art. But not only does art fail to express adequately the highest beliefs of the age: serious art – art that attempts to express those beliefs – loses the internal harmony of Greek art. It points beyond itself to a meaning which it cannot fully express.

Finally, in post-medieval times, with the rise of Protestantism and the growing secularization of philosophy and of culture in general, our lives are governed by abstract, reflective thought, not by sensory and pictorial imagery. Our conduct is guided not by parables or by heroic ideals, but by rules and regulations. Our natural response to art is to think

about it as if it were scientific prose. All this affects the artist. If he is not content to produce nostalgic imitations of the art of the past, reflective thought invades his art and it becomes picturesque philosophy.³⁴

Art and Irony

Serious art expresses a definite vision in a sensory medium. So far Hegel has argued that the modern artist, if he expresses a vision, does so in reflective, conceptual, rather than sensory, terms. But thoughtful reflection not only develops the artist's vision beyond what is sensorily expressible, it also undermines his attachment to any definite vision. Unreflective men support Greeks against Trojans, Christendom against Islam, Revolution against Restoration; they are entrenched in and attached to their own society and way of life. But reflective men break loose from such attachments and succumb to irony; reflection reveals the merits of the other side and the limits of one's own. Truncated reflection may lead one to prefer one side to another and restore one's attachment to it – as an impartial referee decides that a boxer has won on points. But the referee reflects only on the performance of the boxers, not on the criteria by which he assesses their performance. The reflection of the ironist, by contrast, never ceases: he reflects on societies, philosophies, religions, and types of art; he reflects on the criteria for assessing them, and on the criteria for assessing those criteria. Thus the reflective artist becomes an ironist, without attachment to any definite cause or way of life. He is not a pagan or a Christian, but a *tabula rasa*, which can take on any subject-matter or artistic style.³⁵

Hegel associates the irony of the Romantics with Fichte,³⁶ but it has, as he allows, several sources. One of them is art itself. Great art of all periods, the Romantics argued, is ironical; the artist remains aloof and detached, sympathetic to, but never wholly involved in, the partisan passions of his characters. Another is Christianity's concentration on the individual's inner life: what counts before God is the individual as such, not whether he is Greek or Roman, master or slave. Detachment from externals was intensified by Protestantism. In philosophy, it finds expression in the ego of Descartes, as well as of Fichte: the Cartesian ego too is neither Greek nor Roman, neither master nor slave. And, finally, irony stems from the historical tendency of Hegel's age (and of the Schlegels in particular),³⁷ which is, in turn, related to Protestantism and Cartesianism: the bare ego, detached from its own time and place, can range freely in imagination, and in allegiance, over other times and places.³⁸

Hegel doubts whether the reflectively detached artist can produce art to rival that of past, less reflective, ages. Nor, he argues, can he adequately express in art his ironical detachment. Attempts to produce ironical art result only in feeble art.³⁹ Thus, unlike Greek antiquity and medieval Christianity, ironical modernity cannot be adequately expressed in art.

Irony and Philosophy

Hegel considers irony mainly in relation to aesthetics and morality.⁴⁰ But reflective irony is deeply rooted in

philosophy itself. A typical move in philosophy is to argue that neither of two opposing positions is correct and that the truth lies in transcending both positions. Plato, in his *Sophist*, criticizes both idealism (which he had earlier espoused) and materialism, arguing that some position must be found that avoids the pitfalls of both. Hegel's own dialectic involves a strategy of this type.⁴¹ One of the problems that Hegel's dialectic is designed to meet is similar to that faced by the modern artist: 'Since there are so many incompatible philosophies, how are we to decide which is correct?'⁴² And to the suggestion that we can apply some criterion to choose between them, the reply is: 'And since there are so many different criteria, how are we to choose between *them*?' Hegel's reply to this difficulty is that we do not have to choose between distinct philosophies or between different criteria for assessing them; for if we examine them properly, applying the strategy of criticizing and transcending opposites, we find that they are not ultimately incompatible with each other, but form parts of a single, all-embracing philosophy.

Hegel's solution to the problem of philosophical irony suggests the possibility of an analogous solution to aesthetic irony. Might the artist not – instead of remaining a *tabula rasa*, an aloof, detached ironist who dabbles in a variety of themes and styles – integrate all themes and styles into a single coherent work, or type, of art? The Romantics sometimes saw Goethe as a 'universal' artist of this type, transcending and combining both classical and romantic art. Schelling envisaged an art of the future that would combine the central features of ancient and modern art. But Hegel cannot see how a single coherent work, or type, of art could embrace and contain all previous types of art. Thus the

problem raised by reflective irony can be solved *for* philosophy *within* philosophy. But it cannot be solved *for* art *within* art. The solution for art is provided not by art, but by the philosophy of art. The philosophy of art, in Hegel's view, performs a task that exceeds the capacity of art, that of surveying the diversity of arts and art forms and of integrating them into a single coherent system.⁴³

The End of Art or the End of History?

So far Hegel has argued that the history of art, since ancient Greece or at least since the Renaissance, is a history of decline. But sometimes he suggests that art is approaching its end for a reason which is not directly related to the contemporary decline of art. Art, he implies, has exhausted all its significant possibilities, and there is nothing left for it to do, except to produce new variations on old themes. The three art forms (symbolism, classicism and romanticism) and the five arts (architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry) constitute a field (or a 'Pantheon') of possibilities, whose slow realization over the centuries is now more or less complete.⁴⁴ New works of art, however excellent, cannot significantly enlarge the Pantheon that is already realized.

The idea that all the significant possibilities are exhausted cannot, however, be confined to art alone. The continuance of philosophy, and of history in general, also requires significant innovation and thus the availability of an as yet unrealized stock of possibilities.⁴⁵ But Hegel often seems to imply that all significant historical and philosophical possibilities have now been actualized, leaving no room for significant future developments. History and philosophy

have, on this account, no more of a future than art. The difference is that history and philosophy reach, in Hegel's own time, a majestic climax: men become fully self-conscious, aware of the whole historical process by which they reached their present condition; they have fulfilled their final destiny and have no further to go. Art, by contrast, cannot reach such a climax, but peters out in reflection and irony.

Hegel occasionally suggests another view of history, and implicitly of philosophy, namely, that they have exhausted not all significant possibilities, but only all the significant possibilities that we, from our present standpoint, can conceive of. There is, he suggests, more history to come – perhaps in America or Russia – but we cannot predict, or in any detail imagine, what forms it will take.⁴⁶ On this account, the climax that history and philosophy seem to reach in Hegel's own day is only the end of a chapter, or perhaps only an illusion consequent upon the attempt to encompass a mere fragment of human history in a coherent narrative.

Hegel wavers between these two positions: that history has exhausted all its possibilities, and that it has exhausted all the possibilities presently conceivable. But neither position allows him to say that art in particular (in contrast, that is, to philosophy and world history) has come to an end. What he means to imply, in his lectures on art, is that philosophy and history will go from strength to strength, generating ever new forms, while the role of art, if not its intrinsic merit, will diminish: 'We may well hope that art will always rise higher and come to perfection, but the form of art has ceased to be the supreme need of the spirit.'⁴⁷ But he cannot

predict that history and philosophy will continue to flourish while art will decline, that art will never again acquire the significance that it had in Greece or that it will never reach the heights of Dante and Shakespeare.⁴⁸ At other times in the past, art has seemed to be exhausted or to be subverted by, or turning into, philosophy, only to recover its vigour later on. All that he can legitimately say, consistently with his overall view of history, is that now, in the 1820s, history and philosophy have reached a significant climax, while art has declined. The possibilities of the romantic art form inspired by Christianity seem to be exhausted. But as to what will happen next, whether in history, philosophy or art, we cannot predict – apart from the elaboration of the details of our present achievements. In all these spheres – in art, as well as philosophy and history – the future, in so far as it is interestingly different from the present, is closed to us.

Notes

1. See F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, tr. D. W. Stott (Minneapolis, 1989), p. 10. Schelling is comparing his own age with that of Albrecht Dürer, Raphael, Cervantes, Calderón and Shakespeare.
2. See section [XCIII](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.
3. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, p. 10: 'When such a fortunate age of pure production has passed, reflection enters, and with it an element of estrangement. What was earlier living spirit is now transmitted theory.' For Hegel, see e.g. section [XVIII](#) of his *Introduction*.
4. On the history of aesthetics, see B. Bosanquet, *A History of Aesthetic*, 2nd edn (London, 1904) and K. E. Gilbert and H. Kuhn, *A History of Esthetic*, 2nd edn (London, 1956).
5. See section 1, n. 1, of my Commentary. For a defence of the view that Baumgarten contributed more to aesthetics than its name, see 'The "Aesthetica" of Baumgarten' in Benedetto Croce, *Philosophy. Poetry. History: An Anthology of Essays*, tr. C. Sprigge (London, 1966), pp. 427–50.
6. See Hegel's account of Kant's theory in sections [LXXVII](#)–[LXXXII](#) of his *Introduction* and my notes on them.
7. *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, originally published in *Die Horen*, 1795–6.
8. See section [LXXXIII](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.
9. See section [LXXXVI](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.

10. Translated by D. W. Stott as *The Philosophy of Art*.
11. *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline* was published in 1817 and, with successive revisions and additions, in 1827, 1830 and (posthumously) 1840-45. The main translations of the three parts are: I. *Hegel's Logic*, tr. W. Wallace, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1975); II. *The Philosophy of Nature*, tr. A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1970) and by M.J. Petry (London, 1970); III. *The Philosophy of Mind*, tr. W. Wallace and A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1971).
12. *Hegel and the Human Spirit: A Translation of the Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit (1805-6)*, tr. L. Rauch (Detroit, 1983). The triad of art (or poetry), religion (or mythology) and philosophy (or prose), as three different ways in which man expresses his experience, appeared earlier in Vico's *Principles of a New Science of the Common Nature of Peoples* (1725). Vico argued that they appear successively in history, and each forms the basis of a distinct type of society. (Hegel nowhere mentions Vico, however.)
13. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1977). This was originally intended as an introduction to Hegel's system.
14. *The Science of Logic*, tr. A. V. Miller (London, 196g).
15. See Hegel's *Introduction*, section cv.
16. See section [xcvi](#), nn. 2 and 3, in my Commentary.
17. See section [cxi](#) n. 4, in my Commentary.
18. *Begriff*. Bosanquet often renders this as 'idea', 'notion' or

‘conception’. See also section [XL](#), n. 3, in my Commentary.

19. *Idee*. Bosanquet sometimes renders this as ‘idea’. See also section [xxxvi](#), n. 5, in my Commentary.

20. See sections LXXVII and LXXX of Hegel’s *Introduction*, and my notes.

21. Hegel’s central use of the words ‘true’ (*wahr*) and ‘truth’ (*Wahrheit*) is to mark the fact that something realizes its concept and is thus an Idea, e.g. a true state is a state that realizes or lives up to the concept of the state, in contrast to an underdeveloped or deformed state. But since any finite entity, such as a state, is subject to imperfection and eventual destruction, Hegel is also inclined to say that only God, the absolute, or the universe as a whole is strictly true. See also section LXXIII, n. 5, in my Commentary.

22. Time, in Hegel’s view, presupposes the existence of finite entities: finite entities come into being and perish, and this gives rise to time. Hence nature has no beginning *in time*. It does not follow that nature had no beginning, since we might say that nature, and therefore time as well, began e.g. ten million years ago. But Hegel has no clear view on this question.

23. Hegel also has no clear answer to the questions when and how man emerged. His doctrine that only events of which we possess a written historical record constitute history excludes these questions from the subject-matter of the historian. He discusses and rejects various fanciful accounts in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction: Reason in History*, tr. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge,

1975).

24. See section cxv of Hegel's *Introduction*.

25. When 'classical' Greek art is contrasted with 'archaic' (and with 'Hellenistic') art, it refers to the art produced in Greece between 480 and 323 BC, i.e. from the end of the Persian war to the death of Alexander. Hegel uses 'classical' in a wider sense, in which almost all Greek art is classical, though 'classical', like 'symbolic' and 'romantic', refers primarily to a type of style which may occur at any period. 'Romantic' is also ambiguous, referring firstly to the general type of art in the Christian era as a whole, and secondly to the Romantic movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

26. See section XLVII, n. 2, in my Commentary.

27. See section [XIV](#), n. 4, in my Commentary. Characters in modern drama, especially Shakespeare, are, in Hegel's view, more strongly individualized than those in Greek drama. This reflects the more markedly individualistic and secular nature of modern man.

28. See sections [CVII](#), n. 5, and [CXI](#), n. 1, in my Commentary.

29. See sections [C](#) and [CI](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.

30. See esp. section [CIII](#), n. 4, in my Commentary.

31. *Inhalt*. Hegel uses this word to refer both to the theme of a work of art (e.g. the anger of Achilles) and to its deeper meaning (e.g. the Homeric world-view). When he says that

art has the same content as philosophy, he is using 'content' in the latter sense.

32. Hegel does not (like Schelling and Heidegger) doubt that philosophy can in principle express its meaning adequately, and does not need to be supplemented by e.g. art or mystical experience. This is because he believes (i) that conceptual thoughts are ultimately what art and religion *mean* and that to ask for *their* meaning is like asking for the meaning of a meaning; (ii) that all thoughts and meanings can in principle be expressed in prosaic, conceptual language; and (iii) that conceptual thought cannot assign limits to itself, and coherently suppose that there are problems it cannot solve or realms beyond its comprehension.

33. See sections [xvi](#), n. 4; [xvii](#), n. 3; and esp. CVII, n. 1, in my Commentary.

34. See section [xvii](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.

35. Hegel develops this line of thought in *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1975), I, pp. 602ff. ('The End of the Romantic Form of Art'), and, in connection with Friedrich Schlegel and the Romantic circle, in sections LXXXVI-XCI of his *Introduction*.

36. See esp. section LXXXVII of his *Introduction*.

37. See sections [xxxiv](#) and [lxxxvi](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.

38. This exemplifies Hegel's belief that if subjectivity is sufficiently intensified it coincides with objectivity.

39. See section [XCI](#) of his *Introduction*.
40. See esp. Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1952), pp. 101-3.
41. See esp. sections [LXXI](#)-[LXXV](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*, on the overcoming of opposition or antithesis.
42. Hegel tackles this problem in his *Encyclopaedia*, §13. See *Hegel's Logic*, pp. 18-19.
43. See esp. sections [XCIV](#)-[CXV](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.
44. See section [cxv](#), n. 7, in my Commentary.
45. Religion differs from art and philosophy in that its continuance *essentially* requires only continuing belief and practice, not innovation. (This does not entail that belief and practice can be maintained *without* innovation.)
46. See esp. Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*.
47. Knox, *LA*, 1, p. 103.
48. It might be objected that if art were to regain the position it held in Greece, this would involve a decline in humanity's conceptual and, therefore, spiritual powers. But Hegel has no right to exclude such a (not unprecedented) decline, or even the possibility that humanity's future creations will resist the categories of 'conceptual', 'sensuous', etc. In fact, it has often been suggested that Hegel's own philosophy has a strongly aesthetic dimension and, in intention at least, a unity comparable to that of a work of

art. If that is so, it may be one of those creations that resist classification as philosophy rather than art.

Chronology

1770 27 August: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel is born in Stuttgart.

1773 Hegel's sister Christiane (d. 1832) is born. Later, his close relationship to her fosters his love of Sophocles' *Antigone*.

1783 Hegel's mother dies.

1788 October: Hegel enrolls in the philosophical faculty of Tübingen University.

1790 November: Transfers to the theological faculty, where he shares a dormitory with Schelling and Hölderlin, as well as several other students.

1793 September: Graduates and becomes tutor to the children of a wealthy Swiss family in Bern.

1795 Composes, but did not publish, a *Life of Jesus*, in which Jesus is portrayed as a Kantian moralist. Begins intensive work on the Christian religion.

1797 Becomes a house-tutor in Frankfurt, where his friend Hölderlin has a similar position. Writes what is now known as the 'Earliest System-Programme of German Idealism', in which he hoped for a fusion of beauty, truth and goodness in a new aesthetic community comparable to ancient Athens.

1799 Hegel's father dies, leaving him a small legacy that gives

him more financial independence.

1801 Moves to Jena where Schelling is a professor. Obtains his 'habilitation' (the postdoctoral lecturing qualification) with a dissertation 'On the Orbits of the Planets'. Publishes his first philosophy book, *On the Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's Systems of Philosophy*.

1802–3 Together with Schelling Hegel edits the *Critical Journal of Philosophy*, most of which is written by Hegel.

1805 Becomes an Associate Professor of philosophy at Jena University.

1807 Christiana Charlotte Burkhardt, née Fischer, gives birth to Hegel's illegitimate son, Georg Ludwig Friedrich Fischer (d. 1831).

March: Hegel moves to Bamberg in Bavaria to edit a newspaper, *Bamberger Zeitung*.

April: *Phenomenology of Spirit* is published.

1808 November: Becomes Rector (headmaster) of the Nuremberg Gymnasium (grammar school).

1811 Marries Marie von Tucher (1791–1855).

1812 The first volume of his *Science of Logic* is published.

1813 A second volume of the *Science of Logic* appears. A son, Karl, is born (d. 1901).

1814 A son, Immanuel, is born (d. 1891).

1816 The final volume of the *Science of Logic* appears in the autumn. Accepts an offer of a professorship at Heidelberg and moves there in October.

1817 Ludwig Fischer is adopted into Hegel's family.
Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences appears.

December. Offered a chair in Berlin.

1818 *September:* Moves to Berlin.

1820 *Philosophy of Right* appears.

1822 Visits Holland in the autumn.

1823 Visits Prague and Vienna in the autumn.

1827 A revised and expanded edition of the *Encyclopaedia* appears. In the late summer he goes to Paris and later visits Goethe in Weimar.

1829 Hegel is elected Rector of Berlin University and holds the post for a year.

1830 A third edition of the *Encyclopaedia* appears.

1831 Works on a second edition of his *Science of Logic*.

April: Publishes an essay, 'On the English Reform Bill'.

14 November. Dies from a long-standing gastro-intestinal ailment.

Further Reading

Good accounts of Hegel's thought against the background of his life are provided by Edward Gaird, *Hegel* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1883) and Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: Reinterpretations, Texts, Commentary* (NY: Doubleday, 1965). A more detailed account of his life is given in Terry Pinkard's *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Good overall accounts of Hegel's philosophy are to be found in Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) and Stephen Houlgate, *Freedom, Truth and History: An Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1991).

Hegel himself is most easily approached by way of his posthumously published lectures. The lectures most relevant to the concerns of this volume are: *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975); *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, trans. P. Hodgson and R. Brown (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984–6); and *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. H. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). Of the works Hegel published himself, those most relevant to aesthetics are the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) and *Philosophy of Mind: Part Three of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. W.

Wallace and A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

There are several good monographs on Hegel's philosophy of art, in particular: Stephen Bungay, *Beauty and Truth: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); William Desmond, *Art and the Absolute: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986); and Jack Kaminsky, *Hegel on Art* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1962). Two collections of essays on the subject are W. Steinkraus and K. Schmitz (eds.), *Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy* (NJ: Humanities Press, 1980) and W. Maker (ed.), *Hegel and Aesthetics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000). There are also some excellent articles, among them D. Henrich, 'Art and Philosophy of Art Today: Reflections with Reference to Hegel', in R. E. Amacher and V. Lange (eds), *New Perspectives in German Literary Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964); D. Henrich, 'The Contemporary Relevance of Hegel's Aesthetics', in M. Inwood (ed.), *Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); and R. Wicks, 'Hegel's Aesthetics: An Overview', in F. Beiser (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

A Note on the Translation and Commentary

Bernard Bosanquet's translation first appeared in 1886 under the title *The Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy of Fine Art*. It was reprinted in 1905 with no alterations. In his 'Translator's Preface' Bosanquet wrote: 'I have hoped that the present volume may be of interest to many who, without being students of philosophy, are intelligent lovers of art. I have therefore done my best to *interpret* philosophical expressions, instead of merely furnishing their technical equivalents. I have also added a few short notes, either to explain literary allusions, or to complete the interpretation of technical terms... I have broken up the *Einleitung*, or Introduction proper, which is continuous in the original, into four chapters ['Of these', he adds in a note, 'Chapter III is subdivided into two Parts, because of the disproportionate length of the division in the original to which it corresponds'], hoping that the arrangement of the discussion may be thus rendered easier to follow. The *Einteilung* [or 'Division of the Subject'], which forms my Chapter V, is a separate chapter in the original. The table of contents is translated from the original, excepting those portions of it which are enclosed in square brackets, []. I have retained Bosanquet's arrangement of the *Introduction*, and, apart from the correction of two errors and minor changes to modernize

spellings and punctuation, I have not altered his translation.

Since Bosanquet's time, two complete translations into English of Hegel's lectures on aesthetics, including the Introduction, have appeared: F. P. B. Osmaston's *The Philosophy of Fine Art* (London, 1920) and T. M. Knox's *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (Oxford, 1975). Knox's translation of the Introduction (which contains the first ninety pages of the 1,237 pages of the complete translation) was printed separately as *Hegel's Introduction to Aesthetics, being The Introduction to the Berlin Lectures of the 1820s*, together with an Interpretative Essay by C. Karelis (Oxford, 1979). (In my Commentary I refer to Knox's complete translation as 'Knox, LA' and to his translation of the Introduction simply as 'Knox'.) The defects of Osmaston's version are recorded by Knox (Knox, LA, 1, pp. vii, xiii), and Knox's translation is generally acknowledged to have superseded Osmaston's. Knox and Bosanquet are more evenly matched. Bosanquet sometimes captures Hegel's meaning where it has eluded Knox, and his elevated, elegant prose seems to me to convey the flavour of the original better than Knox's. From a scholarly point of view, Knox has the advantage that he attempts to retain in his translation much of Hegel's technical vocabulary, while Bosanquet 'interprets' it and attempts to rethink Hegel's thoughts in the English language. For example, Knox regularly translates *Begriff* as 'Concept', *Vorstellung* as 'idea' and *Idee* as 'Idea', preserving distinctions which are sometimes, but not always, important for Hegel. In Bosanquet, by contrast, the distinctions often disappear: 'idea' is used on occasion for all three German words, and *Begriff* is also translated as 'notion' and 'conception'. In my Commentary, I often draw attention to the original German word or expression, when some point

of interpretation seems to depend on it. But when Hegel's meaning is uncontroversial and Bosanquet has conveyed it adequately, I have usually preferred to leave well alone and not entangle the reader in the complexities of Hegel's vocabulary unnecessarily.* I have thus for the most part omitted those of Bosanquet's notes that record the German words or expressions that he is translating.

In my Commentary, however, I have retained all of Bosanquet's notes, indicated by [B], that concern points of substance, even (and especially) when I disagree with him. Bosanquet's interpretations of Hegel, even when controversial, invariably merit respect, and his learned allusions to works of art of his own and earlier periods are usually apt. My own notes are more extensive than Bosanquet's. Their purpose is threefold: to supplement the scholarly information supplied by Bosanquet, to interpret (and on occasion to reconstruct) Hegel's arguments, and to assess the validity of his arguments. Hegel's thought is, in my view, often more intricate, even if it is ultimately less compelling, than appears from a casual reading of his *Introduction*. But Hegel's *Introduction* can be read casually and enjoyably, though with considerable profit, independently of any notes. For the purposes of my Commentary, I have found it convenient to divide the text into sections, marked by roman numerals. In the text these are enclosed in square brackets, e.g. [VIII], since they appear neither in the German text nor in Bosanquet's translation.

**INTRODUCTORY
AESTHETICS**

LECTURES

ON

CHAPTER I

The Range of Aesthetic Defined, and Some Objections against the Philosophy of Art Refuted

[1] The present course of lectures deals with 'Aesthetic'. Their subject is the wide *realm of the beautiful*, and, more particularly, their province is *Art* – we may restrict it, indeed, to *Fine Art*.

The name 'Aesthetic' in its natural sense is not quite appropriate to this subject. 'Aesthetic' means more precisely the science of sensation or feeling. Thus understood, it arose as a new science, or rather as something that was to become a branch of philosophy for the first time, ¹ in the school of Wolff, at the epoch when works of art were being considered in Germany in the light of the feelings which they were supposed to evoke – feelings of pleasure, admiration, fear, pity, etc. The name was so inappropriate, or, strictly speaking, so superficial, that for this reason it was attempted to form other names, e.g. 'Kallistic'.² But this name, again, is unsatisfactory, for the science³ to be designated does not treat of beauty in general, but merely of *artistic* beauty. We shall, therefore, permit the name Aesthetic to stand, because it is nothing but a name, and so

is indifferent to us, and, moreover, has up to a certain point passed into common language. As a name, therefore, it may be retained. The proper expression, however, for our science is the 'Philosophy of Art', or, more definitely, the 'Philosophy of Fine Art'.⁴

III α. By the above expression we at once exclude the *beauty of Nature*. Such a limitation of our subject may appear to be an arbitrary demarcation, resting on the principle that every science has the prerogative of marking out its boundaries at pleasure. But this is not the sense in which we are to understand the limitation of Aesthetic to *the beauty of art*. It is true that in common life we are in the habit of speaking of beautiful colour, a beautiful sky, a beautiful river, and, moreover, of beautiful flowers, beautiful animals, and, above all, of beautiful human beings. We will not just now enter into the controversy how far such objects can justly have the attribute of beauty ascribed to them, or how far, speaking generally, natural beauty ought to be recognized as existing besides artistic beauty. We may, however, begin at once by asserting that artistic beauty stands *higher* than nature. For the beauty of art is the beauty that is born – born again, that is – of the mind;¹ and by as much as the mind and its products are higher than nature and its appearances, by so much the beauty of art is higher than the beauty of nature.² Indeed, if we look at it *formally* – i.e. only considering in what way it exists, not what there is in it – even a silly fancy such as may pass through a man's head is *higher* than any product of nature; for such a fancy must at least be characterized by intellectual being and by freedom.³ In respect of its content, on the other hand, the sun, for instance, appears to us to be an absolutely necessary factor

in the universe, while a blundering notion passes away as accidental and transient; but yet, in its own being, a natural existence such as the sun is indifferent,⁴ is not free or self-conscious, while if we consider it in its necessary connection with other things we are not regarding it by itself or for its own sake, and, therefore, not as beautiful.⁵

[III] To say, as we have said, in general terms, that mind and its artistic beauty stand *higher* than natural beauty is no doubt to determine almost nothing. For 'higher' is an utterly indefinite expression, which designates the beauty of nature and that of art as if merely standing side by side in the space of the imagination,¹ and states the difference between them as purely quantitative, and, therefore, purely external. But the mind and its artistic beauty, in being '*higher*' as compared with nature, have a distinction which is not simply relative. Mind, and mind only, is capable of truth,² and comprehends in itself all that is, so that whatever is beautiful can only be really and truly beautiful as partaking in this higher element and as created thereby. In this sense the beauty of nature reveals itself as but a reflection of the beauty which belongs to the mind, as an imperfect, incomplete mode of being, as a mode whose really substantial element is contained in the mind itself.³

[IV] Moreover, we shall find the restriction to fine art very natural, for however much has been and is said – though less by the ancients than by ourselves – of the beauties of nature, yet no one has taken it into his head to emphasize the point of view of the *beauty* of natural objects, and to attempt to make a science, a systematic account of these beauties. The aspect of *Utility*, indeed, has been accentuated, and a

science, e.g. of natural things useful against diseases, a *materia medica*, has been compiled, consisting in a description of minerals, chemical products, plants, and animals that are of use for curative purposes. But the realm of nature has not been arrayed and estimated under the aspect of beauty. In dealing with natural beauty we find ourselves too open to *vagueness*, and too destitute of a *criterion*; for which reason such a review would have little interest.

[V] The above prefatory remarks upon beauty in nature and in art, upon the relation between the two, and the exclusion of the former from the region of the subject proper, are meant to remove any idea that the limitation of our science is owing merely to choice and to caprice. But this is not the place to *demonstrate* the above relation, for the consideration of it falls within our science itself, and therefore it cannot be discussed and demonstrated till later.¹

Supposing that for the present we have limited ourselves to the beauty of art, this first step brings us at once into contact with fresh difficulties.

[VI] β. The first thing that may suggest itself to us is the difficulty whether fine art shows itself to *deserve* a scientific treatment. Beauty and art, no doubt, pervade all the business of life like a kindly genius, and form the bright adornment of all our surroundings, both mental and material, soothing the sadness of our condition and the embarrassments of real life, killing time in entertaining fashion, and where there is nothing good to be achieved, occupying the place of what is vicious, better, at any rate, than vice. Yet although art presses in with its pleasing shapes on every possible occasion, from the rude

adornments of the savage to the splendour of the temple with its untold wealth of decoration, still these shapes themselves appear to fall outside the real purposes of life. And even if the creations of art do not prove detrimental to our graver purposes, if they appear at times actually to further them by keeping evil at a distance, still it is so far true that art belongs rather to the relaxation and leisure of the mind, while the substantive interests of life demand its exertion. Hence it may seem unsuitable and pedantic to treat with scientific seriousness what is not in itself of a serious nature. In any case, upon such a view art appears as a superfluity, even if the softening of the mental temper which preoccupation with beauty has power to produce does not turn out a detrimental, because effeminating influence. In this aspect of the matter, the fine arts being granted to be a *luxury*, it has been thought necessary in various ways to take up their defence with reference to their relation towards *practical* necessities, and more especially towards morality and piety; and, as it is impossible to demonstrate their harmlessness, at least to make it credible that the mental luxury in question afforded a larger sum of *advantages* than of *disadvantages*. With this view very serious aims have been ascribed to art, and it has been recommended in various ways as a mediator between reason and sensuousness, between inclination and duty, as the reconciler of these elements in the obstinate conflict and repulsion which their collision generates.¹ But the opinion may be maintained that, assuming such aims of art, more serious though they are, nothing is gained for reason and duty by the attempt at mediation, because these principles, as essentially incapable of intermixture, can be parties to no such compromise, but demand in their manifestation the same purity which they

have in themselves. And it might be said that art itself is not made any more worthy of scientific discussion by such treatment, seeing that it is still doubly a servant – to higher aims, no doubt, on the one hand, but none the less to vacuity and frivolity on the other; and in such service can at best only display itself as a means, instead of being an end pursued for its own sake. Finally, art, considered as a means, seems to labour under this defect of form, that, supposing it to be subordinated to serious ends, and to produce results of importance, still the means employed by art for such purposes is *deception*.² For beauty has its being in appearance.³ Now, it will readily be admitted that an aim which is real and true in itself ought not to be attained by deception, and if it does here and there achieve some success in this way, that can only be the case to a limited extent, and even then deception cannot approve itself as the right means. For the means should correspond to the dignity of the end, and only what is real and true, not semblance or deception, has power to create what is real and true; just as science, for instance, has to consider the true interests of the mind in accordance with the truth of reality and the true way of conceiving it.

In all these respects it may appear as if fine art were *unworthy* of scientific consideration; because, as is alleged, it is at best a pleasing amusement, and even if it pursues more serious aims is in contradiction with their nature, but is at best the mere servant alike of amusement and of serious aims, and yet has at command, whether as the element of its being or as the vehicle of its action, nothing beyond deception and semblance.

[VII] γ. But, in the second place, it is a still more probable

aspect of the question that, even if fine art were to form a subject of philosophical reflections in a general way, it would be no *appropriate* matter for strictly scientific treatment. The beauty of art presents itself to sense, to feeling, to perception, to imagination;¹ its sphere is not that of thought, and the apprehension of its activity and its productions demand another organ than that of the scientific intelligence. Moreover, what we enjoy in the beauty of art is precisely the *freedom* of its productive and plastic energy.² In the origination, as in the contemplation, of its creations we appear to escape wholly from the fetters of rule and regularity. In the forms of art we seek for repose and animation in place of the austerity of the reign of law and the sombre self-concentration of thought; we would exchange the shadowland of the idea³ for cheerful vigorous reality. And lastly, the source of artistic creations is the free activity of fancy, which in her imagination is more free than nature's self. Not only has art at command the whole wealth of natural forms in the brilliant variety of their appearance, but also the creative imagination has power to expatiate inexhaustibly beyond their limit in products of *its own*. It may be supposed that, in presence of this immeasurable abundance of inspiration and its free creations, thought will necessarily lose the courage to bring them *completely* before it, to criticize them, and to array them under its universal formulae.

[VIII] Science, on the contrary, everyone admits, is compelled by its form to busy itself with thought which abstracts from the mass of particulars. For this reason, on the one hand, imagination with its contingency and caprice – that is, the organ of artistic activity and enjoyment – is of necessity

excluded from science. And on the other hand, seeing that art is what cheers and animates the dull and withered dryness of the idea,¹ reconciles with reality its abstraction and its dissociation therefrom, and supplies out of the real world what is lacking to the notion, it follows, we may think, that a *purely* intellectual treatment of art destroys this very means of supplementation, annihilates it, and reduces the idea once more to its simplicity devoid of reality, and to its shadowy abstractness. And further, it is objected that science, as a matter of *content*, occupies itself with what is *necessary*. Now, if Aesthetic puts aside the beauty of nature, we not only gain nothing in respect of necessity, but to all appearance have got further away from it. For the expression *Nature* at once gives us the idea of Necessity and Uniformity,² that is to say, of a behaviour which may be hoped to be akin to science, and capable of submitting thereto. But in the mind, generally, and more particularly in the imagination, compared with nature, caprice and lawlessness are supposed to be peculiarly at home; and these withdraw themselves as a matter of course from all scientific explanation.

Thus in all these aspects – in origin, in effect, and in range – fine art, instead of showing itself fitted for scientific study, seems rather in its own right to resist the regulating activity of thought, and to be unsuitable for strict scientific discussion.

[IX] These and similar objections against a genuinely scientific treatment of fine art are drawn from common ideas, points of view, and considerations, which may be read *ad nauseam* in full elaboration in the older writers upon beauty and the fine arts, especially in the works of French

authors.¹ And in part they contain facts which have a certain truth; in part, too, the argumentation² based upon these facts appears plausible at first sight. Thus, e.g., there is the fact that the forms of beauty are as manifold as the phenomenon of beauty is omnipresent; and from this, if we choose, we may proceed to conclude to a universal *impulse of Beauty* in human nature, and then go on to the further inference: that because ideas of beauty are so endlessly various, and therefore, as seems obvious, are something *particular*,³ it follows that there can be no universal laws of beauty and of taste.⁴

[X] Before it is possible for us to turn from such considerations to our subject proper, it is our business to devote a brief introductory discussion to the objections and doubts which have been raised. In the first place, as regards the *worthiness* of art to be scientifically considered, it is no doubt the case that art can be employed as a fleeting pastime, to serve the ends of pleasure and entertainment, to decorate our surroundings, to impart pleasantness to the external conditions of our life, and to emphasize other objects by means of ornament. In this mode of employment art is indeed not independent, not free, but servile. But what we mean to consider, is the art which is *free*¹ in its end as in its means.

[XI] That art is in the abstract capable of serving other aims, and of being a mere pastime, is moreover a relation which it shares with thought. For, on the one hand, science, in the shape of the subservient understanding, submits to be used for finite purposes, and as an accidental means, and in that case is not self-determined, but determined by alien objects

and relations; but, on the other hand, science liberates itself from this service to rise in free independence to the attainment of truth, in which medium, free from all interference, it fulfils itself in conformity with its proper aims.

[XII] Fine art is not real art till it is in this sense free, and only achieves its highest task when it has taken its place in the same sphere with religion and philosophy, and has become simply a mode of revealing to consciousness and bringing to utterance the Divine Nature,¹ the deepest interests of humanity, and the most comprehensive truths of the mind.² It is in works of art that nations have deposited the profoundest intuitions and ideas of their hearts; and fine art is frequently the key – with many nations there is no other – to the understanding of their wisdom and of their religion.³

[XIII] This is an attribute which art shares with religion and philosophy, only in this peculiar mode, that it represents even the highest ideas *in sensuous forms*,¹ thereby bringing them nearer to the character of natural phenomena, to the senses, and to feeling. The world, into whose depths *thought* penetrates, is a supra-sensuous world, which is thus, to begin with, erected as a *beyond* over against immediate consciousness and present sensation; the power which thus rescues itself from the *here*, that consists in the actuality and finiteness of sense, is the freedom of thought in cognition. But the mind is able to heal this schism which its advance creates; it generates out of itself the works of fine art as the first middle term of reconciliation between pure thought and what is external, sensuous, and transitory, between nature with its finite actuality and the infinite freedom of the

reason that comprehends.²

[XIV] 8. The *element* of art was said to be in its general nature a n *unworthy* element, as consisting in appearance and deception. The censure would be not devoid of justice, if it were possible to class appearance as something that ought not to exist. An appearance or show, however, is essential to existence. Truth could not be, did it not appear and reveal itself, were it not truth *for* someone or something, *for* itself as also *for* Mind.¹ Therefore there can be no objection against appearance in general, but, if at all, against the particular mode of appearance in which art gives actuality to what is in itself real and true. If, in this aspect, the *appearance* with which art gives its conceptions life as determinate existences is to be termed a *deception*, this is a criticism which primarily receives its meaning by comparison with the external world of phenomena and its immediate contact with us as *matter*, and in like manner by the standard of our own world of feeling, that is, the inner world of *sense*. These are the two worlds to which, in the life of daily experience, in our own phenomenal² life, we are accustomed to attribute the value and the title of actuality, reality, and truth, in contrast to art, which we set down as lacking such reality and truth. Now, this whole sphere of the empirical inner and outer world is just what is not the world of genuine reality, but is to be entitled a mere appearance more strictly than is true of art, and a crueller deception. Genuine reality is only to be found beyond the immediacy of feeling and of external objects.³ Nothing is genuinely real but that which is actual in its own right, that which is the substance of nature and of mind, fixing itself indeed in present and definite existence, but in this existence still retaining its essential and self-

centred being, and thus and no otherwise attaining genuine reality. The dominion of these universal powers⁴ is exactly what art accentuates and reveals. The common outer and inner world also no doubt present to us this essence of reality, but in the shape of a chaos of accidental matters, encumbered by the immediateness of sensuous presentation, and by arbitrary states, events, characters, etc. Art liberates the real import of appearances from the semblance and deception of this bad and fleeting world, and imparts to phenomenal semblances a higher reality, born of mind. The appearances of art, therefore, far from being mere semblances, have the higher reality and the more genuine existence in comparison with the realities of common life.

Just as little can the representations of art be called a deceptive semblance in comparison with the representations of historical narrative, as if that had the more genuine truth. For history has not even immediate existence, but only the intellectual presentation of it, for the element of its portrayals, and its content remains burdened with the whole mass of contingent matter formed by common reality with its occurrences, complications, and individualities. But the work of art brings before us the eternal powers that hold dominion in history, without any such superfluity in the way of immediate sensuous presentation and its unstable semblances.

[XV] Again, the mode of appearance of the shapes produced by art may be called a deception in comparison with philosophic thought, with religious or moral principles. Beyond a doubt the mode of revelation which a content attains in the realm of thought is the truest reality;¹ but in comparison with the show or semblance of immediate

sensuous existence or of historical narrative, the artistic semblance has the advantage that in itself it points beyond itself, and refers us away from itself to something spiritual which it is meant to bring before the mind's eye. Whereas immediate appearance does not give itself out to be deceptive, but rather to be real and true, though all the time its truth is contaminated and infected by the immediate sensuous element. The hard rind of nature and the common world gives the mind more trouble in breaking through to the idea² than do the products of art.

[XVI] But if, on the one side, we assign this high position to art, we must no less bear in mind, on the other hand, that art is not, either in content or in form, the supreme and absolute mode of bringing the mind's genuine interests into consciousness. The form of art is enough to limit it to a restricted content. Only a certain circle and grade of truth is capable of being represented in the medium of art.¹ Such truth must have in its own nature the capacity to go forth into sensuous form and be adequate to itself therein, if it is to be a genuinely artistic content, as is the case with the gods of Greece.² There is, however, a deeper form of truth, in which it is no longer so closely akin and so friendly to sense as to be adequately embraced and expressed by that medium. Of such a kind is the Christian conception of truth; and more especially the spirit of our modern world, or, to come closer, of our religion and our intellectual culture, reveals itself as beyond the stage at which art is the highest mode assumed by man's consciousness of the absolute.³ The peculiar mode to which artistic production and works of art belong no longer satisfies our supreme need. We are above the level at which works of art can be venerated as divine,

and actually worshipped; the impression which they make is of a more considerate kind, and the feelings which they stir within us require a higher test and a further confirmation. Thought and reflection have taken their flight above fine art.⁴ Those who delight in grumbling and censure may set down this phenomenon for a corruption, and ascribe it to the predominance of passion and selfish interests, which scare away at once the seriousness and the cheerfulness of art. Or we may accuse the troubles of the present time and the complicated condition of civil and political life as hindering the feelings, entangled in minute preoccupations, from freeing themselves, and rising to the higher aims of art, the intelligence itself being subordinate to petty needs and interests, in sciences which only subserve such purposes and are seduced into making this barren region their home.

[XVII] However all this may be, it certainly is the case that art no longer affords that satisfaction of spiritual wants which earlier epochs and peoples have sought therein, and have found therein only; a satisfaction which, at all events on the religious side, was most intimately and profoundly connected with art.¹ The beautiful days of Greek art, and the golden time of the later middle ages are gone by.² The reflective culture of our life of today, makes it a necessity for us, in respect of our will no less than of our judgement, to adhere to general points of view, and to regulate particular matters according to them, so that general forms, laws, duties, rights, maxims are what have validity as grounds of determination and are the chief regulative force. But what is required for artistic interest as for artistic production is, speaking generally, a living creation, in which the universal is not present as law and maxim, but acts as if one with the

mood and the feelings, just as, in the imagination, the universal and rational is contained only as brought into unity with a concrete sensuous phenomenon. Therefore, our present in its universal condition is not favourable to art.³ As regards the artist himself, it is not merely that the reflection which finds utterance all round him, and the universal habit of having an opinion and passing judgement about art infect him, and mislead him into putting more abstract thought into his works themselves;⁴ but also the whole spiritual culture of the age is of such a kind that he himself stands within this reflective world and its conditions, and it is impossible for him to abstract from it by will and resolve, or to contrive for himself and bring to pass, by means of peculiar education or removal from the relations of life, a peculiar solitude that would replace all that is lost.⁵

[XVIII] In all these respects art is, and remains for us, on the side of its highest destiny, a thing of the past.¹ Herein it has further lost for us its genuine truth and life, and rather is transferred into our *ideas*² than asserts its former necessity, or assumes its former place, in reality. What is now aroused in us by works of art is over and above our immediate enjoyment, and together with it, our judgement; inasmuch as we subject the content and the means of representation of the work of art and the suitability or unsuitability of the two to our intellectual consideration.³ Therefore, the *science* of art is a much more pressing need in our day than in times in which art, simply as art, was enough to furnish a full satisfaction. Art invites us to consideration of it by means of thought, not to the end of stimulating art production, but in order to ascertain scientifically what art is.⁴

[XIX] □. As soon as we propose to accept this invitation we are met by the difficulty which has already been touched upon in the suggestion that, though art is a suitable subject for philosophical reflection in the general sense, yet it is not so for systematic and scientific discussion. In this objection there lies the false idea that a philosophical consideration may, nevertheless, be unscientific. On this point it can only be remarked here with brevity that, whatever ideas others may have of philosophy and philosophizing, I regard the pursuit of philosophy as utterly incapable of existing apart from a scientific procedure. Philosophy has to consider its object in its necessity, not, indeed, in its subjective necessity or external arrangement, classification, etc., but it has to unfold and demonstrate the object out of the necessity of its own inner nature.¹ Until this evolution² is brought to pass the scientific element is lacking to the treatment. In as far, however, as the objective necessity of an object lies essentially in its logical and metaphysical nature, the isolated treatment of art must be conducted with a certain relaxation of scientific stringency. For art involves the most complex presuppositions, partly in reference to its content, partly in respect of its medium and element,³ in which art is constantly on the borders of the arbitrary or accidental. Thus it is only as regards the essential innermost progress of its content and of its media of expression⁴ that we must call to mind the outline prescribed by its necessity.

[XX] The objection that works of fine art elude the treatment of scientific thought because they originate out of the unregulated fancy and out of the feelings, are of a number and variety that defy the attempt to gain a conspectus, and therefore take effect only on feeling and imagination, raises

a problem which appears still to have importance. For the beauty of art does in fact appear in a form which is expressly contrasted with abstract thought, and which the latter is forced to destroy¹ in exerting the activity which is its nature. This idea coheres with the opinion that reality as such, the life of nature and of mind, is disfigured and slain by comprehension; that, so far from being brought close to us by the thought which comprehends, it is by it that such life is absolutely dissociated from us, so that, by the use of thought as the *means* of grasping what has life, man rather cuts himself off from this his purpose. We cannot speak fully on this subject in the present passage, but only indicate the point of view from which the removal of this difficulty, or impossibility depending on maladaptation, might be effected.²

[XXI] It will be admitted, to begin with, that the mind is capable of contemplating itself, and of possessing a consciousness, and that a *thinking* consciousness, of itself and all that is generated by itself. Thought – to think – is precisely that in which the mind has its innermost and essential nature. In gaining this thinking consciousness concerning itself and its products, the mind is behaving according to its essential nature, however much freedom and caprice those products may display, supposing only that in real truth they have mind in them. Now art and its works as generated and created by the mind (spirit) are themselves of a spiritual nature, even if their mode of representation admits into itself the semblance of sensuous being, and pervades what is sensuous with mind. In this respect art is, to begin with, nearer to mind and its thinking activity than is mere external unintelligent nature; in works of art, mind

has to do but with its own.¹ And even if artistic works are not abstract thought and notion,² but are an evolution of the notion *out of* itself, an alienation³ from itself towards the sensuous, still the power of the thinking spirit (mind) lies herein, *not merely* to grasp *itself only* in its peculiar form of the self-conscious spirit (mind), but just as much to recognize itself in its alienation⁴ in the shape of feeling and the sensuous, in its other form, by transmuting the metamorphosed thought⁵ back into definite thoughts, and so restoring it to itself. And in this preoccupation with the other of itself the thinking spirit is not to be held untrue to itself as if forgetting or surrendering itself therein, nor is it so weak as to lack strength to comprehend what is different from itself, but it comprehends both itself and its opposite. For the notion is the universal, which preserves itself in its particularizations, dominates alike itself and its 'other', and so becomes the power and activity that consists in undoing the alienation⁶ which it had evolved.⁷ And thus the work of art in which thought alienates itself⁸ belongs, like thought itself, to the realm of comprehending thought, and the mind, in subjecting it to scientific consideration, is thereby but satisfying the want of its own inmost nature. For because thought is its essence and notion, it can in the last resort only be satisfied when it has succeeded in imbuing all the products of its activity with thought, and has thus for the first time made them genuinely its own. But, as we shall see more definitely below, art is far from being the highest form of mind, and receives its true ratification only from science.⁹

[XXII] Just as little does art elude philosophical consideration by unbridled caprice. As has already been indicated, it is its true

task to bring to consciousness¹ the highest interests of the mind. Hence it follows at once with respect to the *content*² that fine art cannot rove in the wildness of unfettered fancy, for these spiritual interests determine definite bases³ for its content, how manifold and inexhaustible soever its forms and shapes may be. The same holds true for the forms themselves. They, again, are not at the mercy of mere chance. Not every plastic shape⁴ is capable of being the expression and representation of those spiritual interests, of absorbing and of reproducing them; every definite content determines a form suitable to it.

In this aspect too, then, we are in a position to find our bearings according to the needs of thought in the apparently unmanageable mass of works and types of art.

Thus, I hope, we have begun by defining the content of our science, to which we propose to confine ourselves, and have seen that neither is fine art unworthy of a philosophical consideration, nor is a philosophical consideration incompetent to arrive at a knowledge of the essence of fine art.

CHAPTER II

Methods of Science Applicable to Beauty and Art

[XXIII] If we now investigate *the required mode of scientific consideration*, we here again meet with two opposite ways of treating the subject, each of which appears to exclude the other, and so to hinder us from arriving at *any true result*.

On one side we see the science of art merely, so to speak, busying itself about the actual productions of art from the outside, arranging them in series as a history of art, initiating discussions about extant works, or sketching out theories intended to provide the general points of view that are to govern both criticism and artistic production.

On the other side we see science abandoning itself independently to reflection upon the beautiful, and producing mere generalities which do not touch the work of art in its peculiarity, creating, in short, an abstract philosophy of the beautiful.

[XXIV] 1. As regards the former mode of treatment, which starts from the empirical side, it is the indispensable road for anyone who means to become a student of art. And just as in

the present day everyone, even though he is not busied with natural science, yet pretends to be equipped with the essentials of physical knowledge, so it has become more or less obligatory for a cultivated man to possess some acquaintance with art, and the pretension to display oneself as a dilettante and connoisseur is pretty universal.

(a) If such information is really to be recognized as art-scholarship, it must be of various kinds and of wide range. The first necessity is an exact acquaintance with the immeasurable region of individual works of art of ancient and modern times, works which in part have actually perished, in part belong to distant countries or portions of the world, or which adverse fortune has withdrawn from one's own observation. Moreover, every work belongs to its *age*, to its *nation*, and to its environment, and depends upon particular historical and other ideas and aims. For this reason art-scholarship further requires a vast wealth of historical information of a very special kind, seeing that the individualized nature of the work of art is related to individual detail and demands special matter to aid in its comprehension and elucidation. And lastly, this kind of scholarship not only needs, like every other, a memory for information, but a vivid imagination in order to retain distinctly the images of artistic forms in all their different features, and especially in order to have them present to the mind for purposes of comparison with other works.

[XXV] (b) Within this kind of consideration, which is primarily historical, there soon emerge various points of view which cannot be lost sight of in contemplating a work of art, inasmuch as our judgements must be derived from them. Now these points of view, as in other sciences which have an

empirical starting-point, when extracted and put together form universal criteria and rules, and, in a still further stage of formal generalization, *Theories of the arts*. This is not the place to go into detail about literature of this kind, and it may, therefore, suffice to mention a few writings in the most general way. For instance, there is Aristotle's *Poetics*, the theory of tragedy contained in which is still of interest; and to speak more particularly, among the ancients, Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Longinus' *Treatise on the Sublime* suffice to give a general idea of the way in which this kind of theorizing has been carried on. The general formulae which were abstracted by such writers were meant to stand especially as precepts and rules, according to which, particularly in times of degeneration of poetry and art, works of art were meant to be produced. The prescriptions, however, compiled by these physicians of art had even less assured success than those of physicians whose aim was the restoration of health.

[XXVI] Respecting theories of this kind, I propose merely to mention that, though *in detail* they contain much that is instructive, yet their remarks were abstracted from a very limited circle of artistic productions, which passed for *the* genuinely beautiful ones, but yet always belonged to a but narrow range of art. And again, such formulae are in part very trivial reflections which in their generality proceed to no establishment of particulars, although this is the matter of chief concern.

[XXVII] The above-mentioned Horatian epistle is full of these reflections, and, therefore, is a book for all men, but one which for this very reason contains much that amounts to nothing, e.g. –

‘Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci

'He carries all votes, who has mingled the pleasant and the useful, by at once charming and instructing his reader.'¹ This is just like so many copybook headings,² e.g. 'Stay at home and earn an honest livelihood',³ which are right enough as generalities, but lack the concrete determinations on which action depends.

[XXVIII] Another kind of interest was found, not in the express aim of directly causing the production of genuine works of art, but in the purpose which emerged of influencing men's judgement upon works of art by such theories, in short of *forming taste*. In this aspect, Home's¹ *Elements of Criticism*, the writings of Batteux,² and Ramler's *Introduction to the Fine Arts*,³ were works much read in their day. Taste in this sense has to do with arrangement and treatment, the harmony and finish of what belongs to the external aspect of a work of art. Besides, they brought in among the principles of taste views that belonged to the psychology that was then in vogue, and that had been drawn from empirical observation of capacities and activities of the soul, of the passions and their probable heightening, succession, etc. But it remains invariably the case that every man judges works of art, or characters, actions, and incidents according to the measure of his insight and his feelings; and as that formation of taste only touched what was meagre and external, and moreover drew its precepts only from a narrow range of works of art and from a *borne*⁴ culture of intellect and feelings, its whole sphere was inadequate, and incapable of seizing the inmost and the true, and of sharpening the eye for the apprehension thereof.

[XXIX] Such theories proceed in general outline, as do the remaining non-philosophic sciences. The content which they subject to consideration is borrowed from our idea¹ of it, as something found there; then further questions are asked about the nature of this idea, inasmuch as a need reveals itself for closer determinations, which are also found in our idea of the matter, and drawn from it to be fixed in definitions. But in so doing, we find ourselves at once on uncertain and debatable ground. It might indeed appear at first as if the beautiful were a perfectly simple idea. But it soon becomes evident that manifold sides may be found in it, one of which is emphasized by one writer and another by another, or, even if the same points of view are adopted, a dispute arises on the question which side after all is to be regarded as the essential one.

[XXX] With a view to such questions it is held a point of scientific completeness to adduce and to criticize the various definitions of the beautiful. We will do this neither with historical *exhaustiveness*, so as to learn all the subtleties which have emerged in the defining process, nor for the sake of the *historical* interest; but we will simply produce by way of illustration some of the more interesting modern views which come pretty close in their purport to what in fact the idea of the beautiful does involve. For such purpose we have chiefly to mention Goethe's¹ account of the beautiful, which Meyer embodied in his *History of the Formative Arts*² in *Greece*, on which occasion he also brings forward Hirt's view,³ though without mentioning him.

[XXXI] Hirt, one of the greatest of genuine connoisseurs in the present day, in his brochure about artistic beauty (*Horen*,¹

1797, seventh number), after speaking of the beautiful in the several arts, sums up his ideas in the result that the basis of a just criticism of beauty in art and of the formation of taste is the conception of the *Characteristic*.² That is to say, he defines the beautiful as the 'perfect, which is or can be an object of eye, ear, or imagination'. Then he goes on to define the perfect as 'that which is adequate to its aim, that which nature or art aimed at producing within the given genus and species'³ in the formation of the object'. For which reason, in order to form our judgement on a question of beauty, we ought to direct our observation as far as possible to the individual marks which constitute a definite essence. For it is just these marks that form its characteristics. And so by *character* as the law of art he means 'that determinate individual modification whereby forms, movement and gesture, bearing and expression, local colour, light and shade, chiaroscuro and attitude distinguish themselves, in conformity, of course, with the requirements of an object previously selected.' This formula gives us at once something more significant than the other definitions. If we go on to ask what 'the characteristic' is, we see that it involves in the first place *a content*,⁴ as, for instance, a particular feeling, situation, incident, action, individual; and secondly, the *mode* and *fashion* in which this content is embodied in a representation. It is to this, the mode of representation, that the artistic law of the 'characteristic' refers, inasmuch as it requires that every particular element in the mode of expression shall subserve the definite indication of its content and be a member in the expression of that content. The abstract formula of the characteristic thus has reference to the degree of appropriateness with which the particular detail of the artistic form sets in relief the content which it is

intended to represent. If we desire to illustrate this conception in a quite popular way, we may explain the limitation which it involves as follows. In a dramatic work, for instance, an action forms the content; the drama⁵ is to represent how this action takes place. Now, men and women do all sorts of things; they speak to each other from time to time, at intervals they eat, sleep, put on their clothes, say one thing and another, and so forth. But in all this, whatever does not stand in immediate connection with that particular action considered as the content proper, is to be excluded, so that in reference to it nothing may be without import. So, too, a picture, that only represented a single phase of that action, might yet include in it – so wide are the ramifications of the external world – a multitude of circumstances, persons, positions, and other matters which at that moment have no reference to the action in question, and are not subservient to its distinctive character.

But, according to the rule of the characteristic, only so much ought to enter into the work of art as belongs to the display and, essentially, to the expression of that content and no other; for nothing must announce itself as otiose and superfluous.

[XXXII] This is a very important rule, which may be justified in a certain aspect. Meyer, however, in his above-mentioned work, gives it as his opinion that this view has vanished and left no trace, and, in his judgement, to the benefit of art. For he thinks that the conception in question would probably have *led* to caricature. This judgement at once contains the perversity of implying that such a determination of the beautiful had to do with *leading*. The Philosophy of art does not trouble itself about precepts for artists, but it has to

ascertain what beauty in general is, and how it has displayed itself in actual productions, in works of art, without meaning to give rules for guidance. Apart from this, if we examine the criticism, we find it to be true, no doubt, that Hirt's definition includes caricature, for even a caricature¹ may be characteristic; but, on the other hand, it must be answered at once that in caricature the definite character is intensified to exaggeration, and is, so to speak, a superfluity of the characteristic.² But a superfluity ceases to be what is properly required in order to be characteristic, and becomes an offensive iteration, whereby the characteristic itself may be made unnatural. Moreover, what is of the nature of caricature shows itself in the light of the characteristic representation of what is ugly, which ugliness is, of course, a distortion.³ Ugliness, for its part, is closely connected with the content, so that it may be said that the principle of the characteristic involves as a fundamental property both ugliness and the representation of what is ugly. Hirt's definition, of course, gives no more precise information as to what is to be characterized and what is not, in the artistically beautiful, or about the content of the beautiful, but it furnishes in this respect a mere formal rule, which nevertheless contains some truth, although stated in abstract shape.

[\[XXXIII\]](#) Then follows the further question – what Meyer opposes to Hirt's artistic principle, i.e. what he himself prefers. He is treating, in the first place, exclusively of the principle shown in the artistic works of the ancients, which principle, however, must include the essential attribute of beauty. In dealing with this subject he is led to speak of Mengs¹ and Winckelmann's² principle of the Ideal, and pronounces

himself to the effect that he desires neither to reject nor wholly to accept this law of beauty, but, on the other hand, has no hesitation in attaching himself to the opinion of an enlightened judge of art (Goethe), as it is definite, and seems to solve the enigma more precisely.

Goethe says: 'The highest principle of the ancients was the *significant*, but the highest result of successful *treatment*, the *beautiful*.'³

If we look closer at what this opinion implies, we find in it again two elements: the content or matter in hand, and the mode and fashion of representation. In looking at a work of art we begin with what presents itself immediately to us, and after that go on to consider what is its significance or content.⁴

The former, the external element, has no value for us simply as it stands; we assume something further behind it, something inward, a significance, by which the external semblance has a soul breathed into it. It is this, its soul, that the external appearance indicates.⁵ For an appearance which means something does not present to the mind's eye itself and that which it is *qua* external, but something else; as does the *symbol* for instance, and still more obviously the *fable*, whose moral and precept constitutes its meaning. Indeed every *word* points to a meaning and has no value in itself. Just so the human eye, a man's face, flesh, skin, his whole figure, are a revelation of mind and soul, and in this case the meaning is always something other than what shows itself within the immediate appearance.⁶ This is the way in which a work of art should have its meaning, and not appear as exhausted in these mere particular lines, curves,

surfaces, borings, reliefs in the stone, in these colours, tones, sounds, of words, or whatever other medium is employed; but it should reveal life, feeling, soul, import and mind, which is just what we mean by the significance of a work of art.⁷

Thus the requirement of *significance* in a work of art amounts to hardly anything beyond or different from Hirt's principle of the *characteristic*.⁸

According to this notion, then, we find distinguished as the elements of the beautiful something inward, a content, and something outer which has that content as its significance; the inner shows itself in the outer and gives itself to be known by its means, inasmuch as the outer points away from itself to the inner.⁹

We cannot go into detail on this head.

[XXXIV] (c) But the earlier fashion alike of rules and of theories has already been violently thrown aside in Germany – especially owing to the appearance of genuine living poetry – and the rights of genius, its works and their effects, have had their value asserted against the encroachment of such legalities and against the wide watery streams of theory. From this foundation both of an art which is itself genuinely spiritual, and of a general sympathy and communion with it, have arisen the receptivity and freedom which enabled us to enjoy and to recognize the great works of art which have long been in existence, whether those of the modern world,¹ of the Middle Ages, or even of peoples of antiquity quite alien to us (e.g. the Indian productions);² works which by reason of their antiquity or of their alien nationality have, no doubt, a foreign element in them, yet in view of their

content – common to all humanity and dominating their foreign character – could not have been branded as products of bad and barbarous taste, except by the prejudices of theory. This recognition, to speak generally, of works of art which depart from the sphere and form of those upon which more especially the abstractions of theory were based, led, in the first instance, to the recognition of a peculiar kind of art – that is, of *romantic*³ art – and it therefore became necessary to apprehend the idea⁴ and the nature of the beautiful in a deeper way than was possible for those theories. With this influence there co-operated another, viz. that the idea⁵ in its self-conscious form, the thinking mind, attained at this time, on its side, a deeper self-knowledge in philosophy, and was thereby directly impelled to understand the essence of art, too, in a profounder fashion.

[XXXV] Thus, then, even judging by the phases of this more general evolution of ideas, the theoretical mode of reflection upon art which we were considering has become antiquated alike in its principles and in its particulars. Only the *scholarship* of the history of art has retained its permanent value, and cannot but retain it, all the more that the advance of intellectual receptivity, of which we spoke, has extended its range of vision on every side. Its business and vocation consists in the aesthetic appreciation of individual works of art, and in acquaintance with the historical circumstances that externally condition such works; an appreciation which, if made with sense and mind, supported by the requisite historical information, is the only power that can penetrate the entire individuality of a work of art. Thus Goethe, for instance, wrote much about art and particular works of art.¹ Theorizing proper is not the purpose of this

mode of consideration, although no doubt it frequently busies itself with abstract principles and categories, and may give way to this tendency without being aware of it. But for a reader who does not let this hinder him, but keeps before him the concrete accounts of works of art, which we spoke of just now, it at all events furnishes the philosophy of art with the perceptible illustrations and instances, into the particular historical details of which philosophy cannot enter.

This, then, may be taken to be the first mode of the study of art, starting from particular and extant works.

[XXXXVI] 2. There is an essential distinction between this and the opposite aspect, the wholly theoretical reflection, which made an effort to understand beauty as such out of itself alone, and to get to the bottom of its idea.¹

It is well known that Plato was the first to require of philosophical study, in a really profound sense, that its objects should be apprehended, not in their *particularity*, but in their *universality*, in their genus,² in their own nature and its realization: inasmuch as he affirmed that the truth of things did not consist in individual good actions, true opinions, beautiful human beings or works of art, but in *goodness, beauty, truth* themselves. Now, if the beautiful is in fact to be known according to its essence and conception,³ this is only possible by help of the thinking idea,⁴ by means of which the logico-metaphysical nature of the *Idea*⁵ *as such*, as also that of the *particular Idea of the beautiful* enters into the thinking consciousness. But the study of the beautiful in its separate nature and in its own idea may itself turn into an abstract Metaphysic, and even though Plato is accepted

in such an inquiry as foundation and as guide, still the Platonic abstraction must not satisfy us, even for the logical idea of beauty. We must understand this idea more profoundly and more in the concrete, for the emptiness of content which characterizes the Platonic idea is no longer satisfactory to the fuller philosophical wants of the mind of today. Thus it is, no doubt, the case that we, too, in modern times, must in our philosophy of art start from the idea of the beautiful, but we ought not to abide by the fashion of Platonic ideas, which was purely abstract, and was the mere beginning of the philosophic study of beauty.

[xxxvii]

3. The philosophic conception¹ of the beautiful, to indicate its true nature at least by anticipation, must contain, reconciled within it, the two extremes which have been mentioned, by combining metaphysical universality with the determinateness of real particularity. Only thus is it apprehended in its truth, in its real and explicit nature. It is then fertile out of its own resources, in contrast to the barrenness of one-sided reflection. For it has in accordance with its own conception to develop into a totality of attributes, while the conception itself as well as its detailed exposition contains the necessity of its particulars, as also of their progress and transition one into another. On the other hand, again, these particulars, to which the transition is made, carry in themselves the universality and essentiality of the conception as the particulars of which they appear. The modes of consideration of which we have so far been treating lack both these qualities,² and for this reason it is only the complete conception of which we have just spoken that can lead to substantive, necessary, and self-complete determinations.

CHAPTER III

The Conception of Artistic Beauty

Part I – The Work of Art as Made and as Sensuous

[[XXXVIII](#)] After the above prefatory remarks, we approach closer to our subject, the philosophy of artistic beauty. Inasmuch as we are undertaking to treat it scientifically we must begin with its *Conception*.¹ Not till we have established this conception can we map out the division, and with it the plan of the entirety of the science; for a division, if it is not, as is the case with unphilosophical inquiries, taken in hand in a purely external manner, must find its principle in the conception of the object itself.

In presence of such a demand we are at once met by the question, 'Whence do we get this conception?' If we begin with the given conception of artistic beauty itself, that is enough to make it a *presupposition* and mere assumption; now, mere assumptions are not admitted by the philosophical method, but whatever it allows to pass must have its truth demonstrated, i.e. displayed as necessary.

We will devote a few words to coming to an understanding upon this difficulty, which concerns the introduction to every philosophical branch of study when taken in hand by itself.

The object of every science presents *prima facie* two aspects: in the first place, that such an object is; in the second place, *what* it is.

[XXXIX] In ordinary science little difficulty attaches to the first of these points. It might even, at first sight, look ridiculous, if the requirement were presented that in astronomy and physics it should be demonstrated that there was a sun, heavenly bodies, magnetic phenomena, etc. In these sciences, which have to do with what is given to sense, the objects are taken from external experience, and instead of demonstrating them it is thought sufficient to show them.¹ Yet even within the non-philosophical sciences, doubts may arise about the existence of their objects, as e.g. in psychology, the science of mind, it may be doubted if there is a soul, a mind, i.e. something subjective, separate, and independent, distinct from what is material; or in theology, whether a God is. If, moreover, the objects are of subjective kind, i.e. are given only in the mind, and not as external sensuous objects, we are confronted by our conviction that there is nothing in the mind but what its own activity has produced. This brings up the accidental question² whether men have produced this inner idea or perception in their minds or not, and even if the former is actually the case, whether they have not made the idea in question vanish again, or at any rate degraded it to a merely *subjective idea*, whose content has no natural and independent being. So, for instance, the beautiful has often been regarded as not naturally and independently necessary in our ideas, but as a mere subjective pleasure or accidental sense. Our external intuitions, observations, and perceptions are often deceptive and erroneous, but still more is this the case with the inner ideas, even if they have in themselves the greatest vividness,

and are forcible enough to transport us irresistibly into passion.

This doubt whether an object of inward ideas and inward perception as such is or is not, as also the accidental question whether the subjective consciousness has produced it in itself, and whether the act or mode in which it brought it before itself was in its turn adequate to the object in its essential and independent nature – all this is just what aroused in men the higher scientific need, which demands that, even if we have an idea that an object is, or that there is such an object, the object must yet be displayed or demonstrated in terms of its necessity.

This proof, if it is developed in a really scientific way, must also satisfy the further question *What* an object is. But to expound this relation would carry us too far in this place, and we can only make the following remarks on the point.

[XL] If we are to display the necessity of our object, the beautiful in art, we should have to prove that art or beauty was a result of antecedents such as, when considered in their true conception, to lead us on with scientific necessity to the idea¹ of fine art. But in as far as we begin with *art*, and propose to treat of the essence of *its* idea and of the realization of that idea, not of antecedents which go before it *as demanded by* its idea, so far art, as a peculiar scientific object, has, for us, a presupposition which lies beyond our consideration, and which, being a different content, belongs in scientific treatment to a different branch of philosophical study.² For it is nothing short of the whole of philosophy that is the knowledge of the universe as in itself *one single* organic totality which develops itself out of its own conception, and which, returning into itself so as to form a

whole in virtue of the necessity in which it is placed towards itself, binds itself together with itself into *one single* world of truth. In the corollary of this scientific necessity, each individual part is just as much a circle that returns into itself, as it has, at the same time, a necessary connection with other parts. This connection is a backward out of which it derives itself, as well as a forward, to which in its own nature it impels itself on and on, in as far as it is fertile by creating fresh matter out of itself, and issuing it into the further range of scientific knowledge.³ Therefore, it is not our present aim to demonstrate the idea of beauty from which we set out, that is, to derive it according to its necessity from the presuppositions which are its antecedents in science. This task belongs to an encyclopaedic development of philosophy as a whole and of its particular branches. For us, the idea of beauty and of art is a presupposition given in the system of philosophy. But as we cannot in this place discuss this system, and the connection of art with it, we have not yet the idea of the beautiful before us *in a scientific form*; what we have at command are merely the elements and aspects of it, as they are or have at former periods been presented, in the diverse ideas of the beautiful and of art in the mere common consciousness. Having started from this point, we shall subsequently pass to the more profound consideration of the views in question, in order thereby to gain the advantage of, in the first place, obtaining a general idea of our object, and further, by a brief criticism effecting a preliminary acquaintance with its higher principles, with which we shall have to do in the sequel. By this mode of treatment our final introduction will act, so to speak, as the overture to the account of the subject itself, and will serve the purpose of a general collection and

direction of our thoughts towards the proper object-matter of our discussion.

[XLI] What we know, to begin with, as a current idea of the work of art, comes under the three following general predicates:

(1) We suppose the work of art to be no natural product, but brought to pass by means of human activity.

(2) To be essentially made *for* man, and, indeed, to be more or less borrowed from the sensuous¹ and addressed to man's sense.²

(3) To contain an *end*.³

[XLII] 1. As regards the first point, that a work of art is taken to be a product of human activity, this view has given rise (a) to the view that this activity, being the *conscious* production of an external object, can also be *known*,¹ and *expounded*, and learnt, and prosecuted by others. For, what one can do, it might seem, another can do, or imitate,² as soon as he is acquainted with the mode of procedure; so that, supposing universal familiarity with the rules of artistic production, it would only be a matter of anyone's will and pleasure to carry out the process in a uniform way, and so to produce works of art. It is thus that the above-mentioned rule-providing theories and their precepts, calculated for practical observance, have arisen. But that which can be executed according to such instruction can only be something formally regular and mechanical. For only what is mechanical is of such an external kind that no more than a purely empty exercise of will and dexterity is required to receive it among our ideas and put it in act; such an exercise

not needing to be supplemented by anything concrete, or anything that goes beyond the precepts conveyed in general rules. This is most vividly displayed when precepts of the kind in question do not limit themselves to what is purely external and mechanical, but extend to the meaning-laden spiritual activity of true art. In this region the rules contain nothing but indefinite generalities; e.g. 'The theme ought to be interesting, and each individual ought to be made to speak according to his rank, age, sex, and position.' But if rules are meant to be adequate on this subject, their precepts ought to have been drawn up with such determinateness that they could be carried out just as they are expressed, without further and original activity of mind. Being abstract, however, in their content, such rules reveal themselves, in respect of their pretension of being adequate to fill the consciousness of the artist, as wholly inadequate, inasmuch as artistic production is not formal activity in accordance with given determinations. For it is bound as spiritual activity to work by drawing on its own resources, and to bring before the mind's eye a quite other and richer content and ampler individual creations than any abstract formulae can dictate. Such rules may furnish guidance in case of need, if they contain anything really definite, and therefore of practical utility; but their directions can only apply to purely external circumstances.³

[XLIII] (b) The tendency which we have just indicated has therefore been abandoned, and, in place of it, the opposite principle has been pursued to no less lengths. For the work of art came to be regarded no longer as the product of an *activity general* in mankind, but as the work of a mind endowed with wholly peculiar gifts. This mind, it is thought, has then nothing to do but *simply*¹ to give free play to its

particular gift, as though it were a specific force of nature, and is to be entirely released from attention to laws of universal validity, as also from the interference of reflection in its instinctively creative operation. And, indeed, it is to be guarded therefrom, inasmuch as its productions could only be infected and tainted by such a consciousness. In this aspect the work of art was pronounced to be the product of *talent* and *genius*, and stress was laid on the natural element which talent and genius contain. The view was partly right. Talent is specific, and genius universal capability,² with which a man has not the power to endow himself simply by his own self-conscious activity. We shall treat this point more fully in the sequel.

[XLIV] In this place we have only to mention the aspect of falsity in the view before us, in that all consciousness respecting the man's own activity was held, in the case of artistic production, not merely superfluous, but even injurious. Production on the part of talent and genius then appears, in general terms, as a *state*, and, in particular, as a state of *inspiration*. To such a state, it is said, genius is in part excited by a given object, and in part it has the power of its own free will to place itself therein, in which process, moreover, the good service of the champagne bottle is not forgotten. This notion became prominent in Germany in the so-called *epoch of genius*, which was introduced by the early poetical productions of Goethe, and subsequently sustained by those of Schiller.¹ In their earliest works these poets began everything anew, in scorn of all the rules which had then been fabricated, transgressed these rules of set purpose, and, while doing so, distanced all rivals by a long interval. I will not enter more closely into the confusions which have prevailed respecting the conception of inspiration and

genius, and which prevail even at the present day respecting the omnipotence of inspiration as such. We need only lay down as essential the view that, though the artist's talent and genius contains a natural element, yet it is essentially in need of cultivation by thought, and of reflection on the mode in which it produces, as well as of practice and skill in producing. A main feature of such production is unquestionably external workmanship, inasmuch as the work of art has a purely technical side, which extends into the region of handicraft; most especially in architecture and sculpture, less so in painting and music, least of all in poetry. Skill in this comes not by inspiration, but solely by reflection, industry, and practice; and such skill is indispensable to the artist, in order that he may master his external material, and not be thwarted by its stubbornness.

Moreover, the higher an artist ranks, the more profoundly ought he to represent the depths of heart and mind; and these are not known without learning them, but are only to be fathomed by the direction of a man's own mind to the inner and outer world. So here, too, *study* is the means whereby the artist brings this content into his consciousness, and wins the matter and burden of his conceptions.

[XLIV] In this respect one art may need the consciousness and cognition of such matter more than others. Music, for instance, which concerns itself only with the undefined movement of the inward spiritual nature, and deals with musical sounds as, so to speak, feeling without thought,¹ needs little or no spiritual content to be present in consciousness. It is for this reason that musical talent generally announces itself in very early youth, while the head is still empty and the heart has been but little moved,

and is capable of attaining to a very considerable height in early years, before mind and life have experience of themselves.² And again, as a matter of fact we often enough see very great expertness in musical composition, as also in execution, subsist along with remarkable barrenness of mind and character. The reverse is the case with poetry. In poetry all depends on the representation – which must be full of matter and thought – of man, of his profounder interests, and of the powers that move him; and therefore mind and heart themselves must be richly and profoundly educated by life, experience, and reflection, before genius can bring to pass anything mature, substantial, and self-complete. Goethe's and Schiller's first productions are of an immaturity, and even of a rudeness and barbarism, that are absolutely terrifying. This phenomenon, that the greater part of those attempts display a predominant mass of thoroughly prosaic and in part of frigid and commonplace elements, furnishes the chief objection to the common opinion, that inspiration is inseparable from youth and youthful fire. Those two men of genius, it may be said, were the first to give our nation works of true poetry, and yet it was only their mature manhood³ that presented us with creations profound, substantial, and the outcome of genuine inspiration, while no less thoroughly perfect in form. Thus, too, it was not till his old age that Homer devised and uttered his immortal songs.⁴

[XLVI] (c) A third view, which concerns the idea of the work of art as a product of human activity, refers to the position of such a work towards the external appearances of nature. It was an obvious opinion for the common consciousness to adopt on this head, that the work of art made by man

ranked *below* the product of nature. The work of art has no feeling in itself, and is not through and through a living thing, but, regarded as an external object, is dead. But we are wont to prize the living more than the dead. We must admit, of course, that the work of art has not in itself movement and life. An animated being in nature is within and without an organization appropriately elaborated down to all its minutest parts, while the work of art attains the semblance¹ of animation on its surface only, but within is common stone, or wood and canvas, or, as in the case of poetry, is idea,² uttering itself in speech and letters. But this aspect, viz. its external existence, is not what makes a work into a production of fine art; it is a work of art only in as far as, being the offspring of mind, it continues to belong to the realm of mind, has received the baptism of the spiritual,³ and only represents that which has been moulded in harmony with mind. A human interest, the spiritual value which attaches to an incident, to an individual character, to an action in its plot and in its dénouement, is apprehended in the work of art, and exhibited more purely⁴ and transparently than is possible on the soil of common unartistic reality. This gives the work of art a higher rank than anything produced by nature, which has not sustained this passage through the mind. So, for instance, by reason of the feeling and insight of which a landscape as depicted by an artist is a manifestation, such a work of mind assumes a higher rank than the mere natural landscape. For everything spiritual is better than anything natural. At any rate, no existence in nature is able, like art, to represent divine ideals.⁵

Upon that which, in works of art, the mind borrows from

its own inner life it is able, even on the side of external existence, to confer *permanence*; whereas the individual living thing of nature is transient, vanishing, and mutable in its aspect, while the work of art persists. Though, indeed, it is not mere permanence, but the accentuation of the character which animation by mind confers, that constitutes its genuine pre-eminence as compared with natural reality.

[XLVII] Nevertheless, this higher rank assigned to the work of art is in turn disputed by another idea of the common consciousness. It is said that nature and its products are a work of God, created by his goodness and wisdom, whereas the work of art is *merely* a human production, made after man's devising by man's hands. In this antithesis between natural production as a divine creation and human activity as a merely finite creation, we at once come upon the misconception that God does *not* work in man and through man, but limits the range of his activity to nature alone. This false opinion is to be entirely abandoned if we mean to penetrate the true conception of art. Indeed, in opposition to such an idea, we must adhere to the very reverse, believing that God is more honoured by what mind does or makes than by the productions or formations of nature. For not only is there a divinity¹ in man, but in him it is operative under a form that is appropriate to the essence of God, in a mode quite other and higher than in nature. God is a Spirit, and it is only in man that the medium through which the divine element passes has the form of conscious spirit, that actively realizes itself. In nature the corresponding medium is the unconscious, sensible, and external, which is far below consciousness in value. In the products of art God is operative neither more nor less than in the phenomena of nature; but the divine element, as it makes itself known in

the work of art, has attained, as being generated out of the mind, an adequate thoroughfare for its existence; while existence in the unconscious sensuousness of nature is not a mode of appearance adequate to the Divine Being.²

[XLVIII] (d) Granting, then, that the work of art is made by man as a creation of mind, we come to the last question, which will enable us to draw a deeper result from what has been said. What is man's need to produce works of art?¹ On the one hand the production may be regarded as a mere toy of chance and of man's fancies, that might just as well be let alone as pursued. For, it may be said, there are other and better means for effecting that which is the aim of art, and man bears in him interests that are yet higher and of more import than art has power to satisfy. But, on the other hand, art appears to arise from the higher impulse and to satisfy the higher needs, at times, indeed, even the highest, the absolute need of man, being wedded to the religious interests of whole epochs and peoples, and to their most universal intuitions respecting the world. This inquiry² concerning the not contingent but absolute need of art³ we cannot as yet answer completely, seeing that it is more concrete than any shape which could here be given to the answer.⁴ We must, therefore, content ourselves for the present with merely establishing the following points.

[XLIX] The universal and absolute need out of which art, on its formal side,¹ arises² has its source in the fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness,³ i.e. that he draws out of himself, and makes explicit *for himself*, that which he is, and, generally, whatever is.⁴ The things of nature are only *immediate and single*, but man as mind *reduplicates* himself, inasmuch as

prima facie he is like the things of nature, but in the second place just as really is *for himself*, perceives himself, has ideas of himself, thinks himself, and only thus is active self-realizedness.⁵ This consciousness of himself man obtains in a twofold way: *in the first place theoretically*, in as far as he has inwardly to bring himself into his own consciousness, with all that moves in the human breast, all that stirs and works therein, and, generally, to observe and form an idea of himself, to fix before himself what thought ascertains to be his real being, and, in what is summoned out of his inner self as in what is received from without, to recognize only himself.⁶ Secondly, man is realized for himself by *practical* activity, inasmuch as he has the impulse, in the medium which is directly given to him, and externally presented before him, to produce himself, and therein at the same time to recognize himself.⁷ This purpose he achieves by the modification of external things upon which he impresses the seal of his inner being, and then finds repeated in them his own characteristics. Man does this in order as a free subject to strip the outer world of its stubborn foreignness, and to enjoy in the shape and fashion of things a mere external reality of himself.⁸ Even the child's first impulse involves this practical modification of external things. A boy throws stones into the river, and then stands admiring the circles that trace themselves on the water, as an effect in which he attains the sight of something that is his own doing. This need traverses the most manifold phenomena, up to the mode of self-production⁹ in the medium of external things as it is known to us in the work of art. And it is not only external things that man treats in this way, but himself no less, i.e. his own natural form, which he does not leave as he finds it, but alters of set purpose. This is the cause of all

ornament and decoration, though it may be as barbarous, as tasteless, as utterly disfiguring or even destructive as crushing Chinese ladies' feet, or as slitting the ears and lips. It is only among cultivated men that change of the figure,¹⁰ of behaviour, and of every kind and mode of self-utterance emanates from spiritual education.¹¹

[L] The universal need for expression in art¹ lies, therefore, in man's rational impulse to exalt the inner and outer world into a spiritual consciousness for himself, as an object² in which he recognizes his own self.³ He satisfies the need of this spiritual freedom⁴ when he makes all that exists explicit for himself *within*,⁵ and in a corresponding way realizes this his explicit self *without*,⁶ evoking thereby, in this reduplication of himself, what is in him into vision and into knowledge for his own mind and for that of others.⁷ This is the free rationality of man, in which, as all action and knowledge, so also art has its ground and necessary origin. The specific need of art, however, in contradistinction to other action, political or moral, to religious imagination and to scientific cognition, we shall consider later.⁸

[LI] 2. We have so far been considering that aspect of the work of art in which it is made by man. We have now to pass on to its second characteristic, that it is made for man's *sense*, and for this reason is more or less borrowed from the sensuous.

(a) This reflection has furnished occasion for the consideration to be advanced that fine art is intended to arouse feeling,¹ and indeed more particularly the feeling which we find suits us – that is, pleasant feeling. Looking at

the question thus, men have treated the investigation of fine art as an investigation of the feelings, and asked what feelings it must be held that art ought to evoke – fear, for example, and compassion; and then, how these could be pleasant – how, for example, the contemplation of misfortune could produce satisfaction. This tendency of reflection is traceable particularly to Moses Mendelssohn's times,² and many such discussions are to be found in his writings. Yet such an investigation did not lead men far, for feeling is the indefinite dull region of the mind; what is felt remains wrapped in the form of the most abstract individual subjectivity,³ and therefore the distinctions of feeling are also quite abstract, and are not distinctions of the actual object-matter itself. For instance, fear, anxiety, alarm, terror, are no doubt of one and the same sort of feeling variously modified, but in part are mere quantitative heightenings, in part are forms which in themselves have nothing to do with their content itself, but are indifferent to it. In the case of fear, for instance, an existence is given in which the subject (i.e. a person) has an interest, but at the same time sees approaching the negative that threatens to annihilate this existence, and so finds immediately in himself, as a contradictory affection of his subjectivity, the two at once, this interest and that negative. Now, such fear considered in itself is not enough to condition any content, but is capable of receiving into itself the most diverse and opposite matters.⁴ Feeling, as such, is a thoroughly empty form of subjective affection. No doubt this form may in some cases be manifold in itself, as is hope, grief, joy, or pleasure; and, again, may in such diversity comprehend varied contents, as there is a feeling of justice, moral feeling, sublime religious feeling, and so forth.⁵ But the fact that such

content is forthcoming in different forms of feeling is not enough to bring to light its essential and definite nature; they remain purely subjective affections of myself, in which the concrete matter vanishes, as though narrowed into a circle of the utmost abstraction.⁶ Therefore, the inquiry into the feelings which art arouses, or ought to arouse, comes utterly to a standstill in the indefinite, and is a mode of study which precisely abstracts from the content proper and from its concrete essence and notion. For reflection upon feeling contents itself with the observation of the subjective affection in its isolation, instead of diving into and fathoming the matter in question itself, the work of art, and, while engaged with it, simply letting go the mere subjectivity and its states. In feeling it is just this vacant subjectivity that is not merely retained, but given the first place, and that is why men are so fond of having emotions. And for the same reason such a study becomes tedious from its indefiniteness and vacancy, and repulsive from its attentiveness to little subjective peculiarities.⁷

[LII] (b) Now, as a work of art is not merely to do in general something of the nature of arousing emotion – for this is a purpose which it would have in common, without specific difference, with eloquence, historical composition, religious edification, and so forth – but is to do so only in as far as it is beautiful, reflection hit upon the idea, seeing that beauty was the object, of searching out a *peculiar feeling of beauty* to correspond to it, and of discovering a particular *sense of beauty*. In this search it soon appeared that such a sense is no blind instinct made rigidly definite by nature, and capable from the beginning in its own independent essence of discerning beauty. Hence it followed that education came to be demanded for this sense, and the educated sense of

beauty came to be called *taste*, which, although an educated appreciation and apprehension of the beautiful, was yet supposed to retain the nature of immediate feeling. We have already mentioned how abstract theories undertook to educate such a sense of taste, and how external and one-sided that sense remained. The criticism of the time when those views prevailed was not only defective in *universal* principles, but also, in its particular references to individual works of art, was less directed to justifying a *definite* judgement – the power to make one not having at that time been acquired – than to advancing the general education of taste. For this reason such education in its turn came to a standstill in the indefinite, and merely endeavoured so to equip feeling as sense of beauty by help of reflection, that there might thenceforth be capacity to find out beauty whenever and wherever it should exist. Yet the depths of the matter remained a sealed book to mere taste, for these depths demand not only sensibility and abstract reflection, but the undivided reason and the mind in its solid vigour; while taste was only directed to the external surface about which the feelings play, and on which one-sided maxims may pass for valid.¹ But, for this very reason, what is called good taste takes fright at all more profound effects of art, and is silent where the reality comes in question, and where externalities and trivialities vanish. For when great passions and the movements of a profound soul are unveiled, we are no longer concerned with the finer distinctions of taste and its pettifogging particularities. It feels that genius strides contemptuously over such ground as this, and, shrinking before its power, becomes uneasy, and knows not which way to turn.

[LIII] (C) And thus, as we should expect, men have abandoned

the tendency to consider works of art solely with an eye to the education of taste, and with the purpose of merely displaying taste. The connoisseur, or scholar of art, has replaced the art-judge, or man of taste. The positive side of art-scholarship, so far as it concerns a thorough acquaintance with the entire circumference¹ of the individual character in a given work of art, we have already pronounced to be essential to the study of art. For a work of art, owing to its nature as at once material and individual, is essentially originated by particular conditions of the most various kinds, to which belong especially the time and place of its production, then the peculiar individuality of the artist, and in particular the grade of technical development attained by his art. Attention to all these aspects is indispensable to distinct and thorough insight and cognition, and even to the enjoyment of a work of art; it is with them that connoisseurship, or art-scholarship, is chiefly occupied; and all that it can do for us in its own way is to be accepted with gratitude. Yet, though such scholarship is entitled to rank as something essential, still it ought not to be taken for the sole or supreme element in the relation which the mind adopts towards a work of art, and towards art in general. For art-scholarship (and this is its defective side) is capable of resting in an acquaintance with purely external aspects, such as technical or historical details, etc., and of guessing but little, or even knowing absolutely nothing, of the true and real nature of a work of art. It may even form a disparaging estimate of the value of more profound considerations in comparison with purely positive, technical, and historical information. Still, even so, art-scholarship, if only it is of a genuine kind, at least strives after definite grounds and information, and an intelligent judgement, with

which is closely conjoined the more precise distinction of the different, even if partly external, aspects in a work of art, and the estimation of their importance.

[LIV] (d) After these remarks upon the modes of study which have arisen out of that aspect of a work of art in which, being a sensuous object, it is invested with a relation to man as a sensuous being, we will now consider this aspect in its more essential relation to art as such, and so (α) partly as regards the work of art as object, (β) partly with respect to the subjectivity of the artist, his genius, talent, and so on; but without entering into matter relative to these points that can only proceed from the knowledge of art in its universal idea.¹ For we are not yet on genuinely scientific ground, but have only reached the province of external reflection.

[LV] (α) The work of art then, of course, presents itself to sensuous apprehension. It is addressed to sensuous feeling, outer or inner, to sensuous perception and imagination,¹ just as is the nature that surrounds us without, or our own sensitive nature within. Even a speech, for instance, may be addressed to sensuous imagination and feeling. Notwithstanding, the work of art is not only for the *sensuous* apprehension as sensuous object, but its position is of such a kind that as sensuous it is at the same time essentially addressed to the *mind*, that the mind is meant to be affected by it, and to find some sort of satisfaction in it.

This intention of the work of art explains how it is in no way meant to be a natural product and to possess natural life, whether a natural product is to be ranked higher or lower than a *mere* work of art, as it is often called in a depreciatory sense.

For the sensuous aspect of the work of art has a right to existence only in as far as it exists for man's mind, but not in as far as *qua* sensuous thing it has separate existence by itself.² If we examine more closely in what way the sensuous is presented to man, we find that what is sensuous may bear various relations to the mind.

[LVI] ($\alpha\alpha$) The lowest mode of apprehension, and that least appropriate to the mind,¹ is purely sensuous apprehension. It consists naturally in mere looking, listening, feeling, just as in seasons of mental fatigue it may often be entertaining to go about without thought, and just to hear and look around us. The mind, however, does not rest in the mere apprehension of external things by sight and hearing, it makes them objects for its own inner nature, which then is itself impelled in a correspondingly sensuous form to realize itself in the things, and relates itself to them as *desire*.² In this appetitive relation to the outer world, the man stands as a sensuous particular over against the things as likewise particulars;³ he does not open his mind to them with general ideas as a thinking being, but has relations dictated by particular impulses and interests to the objects as themselves particulars, and preserves himself in them, inasmuch as he uses them, consumes them, and puts in act his self-satisfaction by sacrificing them to it. In this negative relation desire requires for itself not merely the superficial appearance of external things, but themselves in their concrete sensuous existence. Mere pictures of the wood that it wants to use, or of the animals that it wants to eat, would be of no service to desire. Just as little is it possible for desire to let the object subsist in its freedom. For its impulse urges it just precisely to destroy this independence and

freedom of external things, and to show that they are only there to be destroyed and consumed.⁴ But, at the same time, the subject himself, as entangled in the particular limited and valueless⁵ interests of his desires, is neither free in himself, for he does not determine himself out of the essential universality and rationality of his will,⁶ nor free in relation to the outer world, for his desire remains essentially determined by things, and related to them.⁷ This relation of desire is not that in which man stands to the work of art. He allows it to subsist as an object, free and independent, and enters into relation with it apart from desire, as with an object which only appeals to the theoretic side of the mind.⁸ For this reason the work of art, although it has sensuous existence, yet, in this point of view, does not require concrete sensuous existence and natural life; indeed, it even *ought* not to remain on such a level, seeing that it has to satisfy only the interests of mind, and is bound to exclude from itself all desire. Hence it is, indeed, that practical desire rates individual things in nature, organic and inorganic, which are serviceable to it, higher than works of art, which reveal themselves to be useless for its purpose, and enjoyable only for other modes of mind.

[LVII] ($\beta\beta$) A second mode in which the externally present may be related to the mind is, in contrast with singular sensuous perception and desire, the purely theoretical relation to the *Intelligence*. The theoretic contemplation of things has no interest in consuming them as particulars, in satisfying itself sensuously, and in preserving itself by their means, but rather in becoming acquainted with them in their universality, in finding their inner being and law, and in conceiving them in terms of their notion. Therefore the

theoretical interest lets the single things be, and holds aloof from them as sensuous particulars, because this sensuous particularity is not what the contemplation exercised by the intelligence looks for. For the rational intelligence does not belong, as do the desires, to the individual subject as such, but only to the individual as at the same time in his nature universal.¹ In as far as man has relation to things in respect of this universality, it is his universal reason which attempts to find himself in nature, and thereby to reproduce the inner essence of things, which sensuous existence, though having its ground therein, cannot immediately display.² But again, this theoretic interest, the satisfaction of which is the work of science, is in the scientific form no more shared by art than the latter makes common cause with the impulse of the purely practical desires. Science may, no doubt, start from the sensuous thing in its individuality, and may possess a sensuous idea of the way in which such an individual presents itself in its individual colour, shape, size, etc. Still, this isolated sensuous thing, as such, has no further relation to the mind, inasmuch as the intelligence aims at the universal, the law, the thought and notion of the object. Not only, therefore, does it abandon all intercourse with the thing as a given individual, but transforms it within the mind, making a concrete object of sense into an abstract matter of thought, and so into something quite other than the same object *qua* sensuous phenomenon. The artistic interest, as distinguished from science, does not act thus. Artistic contemplation accepts the work of art just as it displays itself *qua* external object, in immediate determinateness and sensuous individuality clothed in colour, figure, and sound, or as a single isolated perception, etc., and does not go so far beyond the immediate

appearance of objectivity which is presented before it, as to aim, like science, at apprehending the notion of such an objective appearance as a universal notion.³

Thus, the interest of art distinguishes itself from the practical interest of *desire* by the fact that it permits its object to subsist freely and in independence, while desire utilizes it in its own service by its destruction. On the other hand, artistic contemplation differs from theoretical consideration by the scientific intelligence, in cherishing interest for the object as an individual existence, and not setting to work to transmute it into its universal thought and notion.

[LVIII] ($\gamma\gamma$) It follows, then, from the above, that though the sensuous must be present in a work of art, yet it must only appear as surface and *semblance* of the sensuous. For, in the sensuous aspect of a work of art, the mind seeks neither the concrete framework of matter, that empirically thorough completeness and development of the organism which desire demands, nor the universal and merely ideal thought. What it requires is sensuous presence, which, while not ceasing to be sensuous, is to be liberated from the apparatus of its merely material nature. And thus the sensuous in works of art is exalted to the rank of a mere *semblance* in comparison with the immediate existence of things in nature, and the work of art occupies the mean between what is immediately sensuous and ideal thought.¹ This semblance² of the sensuous presents itself to the mind externally as the shape, the visible look, and the sonorous vibration of things – supposing that the mind leaves the objects uninterfered with (physically), but yet does not descend into their inner essence (by abstract thought), for if it did so, it would entirely destroy their

external existence as separate individuals *for it*. For this reason the sensuous aspect of art only refers to the two *theoretical* senses of *sight* and *hearing*, while smell, taste, and feeling remain excluded from being sources of artistic enjoyment. For smell, taste, and feeling have to do with matter as such, and with its immediate sensuous qualities; smell with material volatilization in air, taste with the material dissolution of substance,³ and feeling with warmth, coldness, smoothness, etc. On this account these senses cannot have to do with the objects of art, which are destined to maintain themselves in their actual independent existence, and admit of no purely sensuous relation. The pleasant for these latter senses is not the beautiful in art. Thus art on its sensuous side purposely produces no more than a shadow-world of shapes, sounds, and imaginable ideas;⁴ and it is absolutely out of the question to maintain that it is owing to simple powerlessness and to the limitations on his actions that man, when evoking worlds of art into existence, fails to present more than the mere surface of the sensuous, than mere *schemata*.⁵ In art, these sensuous shapes and sounds present themselves, not simply for their own sake and for that of their immediate structure,⁶ but with the purpose of affording in that shape satisfaction to higher spiritual interests, seeing that they are powerful to call forth a response and echo in the mind from all the depths of consciousness. It is thus that, in art, the sensuous is *spiritualized*, i.e. the *spiritual* appears in sensuous shape.⁷

[LIX] (β) But for this very reason we have a product of art only in so far as it has found a passage through the mind, and has been generated by spiritually productive activity. This leads us to the other question which we have to answer

– how, that is, the sensuous side, which is indispensable to art, is operative in the artist as a productive state of the subject or person. This, the method and fashion of production, contains in itself as a subjective activity just the same properties which we found objectively present in the work of art; it must be a spiritual activity which, nevertheless, at the same time has in itself the element of sensuousness and immediateness. It is neither, on the one hand, purely mechanical work, as mere unconscious¹ skill in sensuous sleight of hand, or a formal activity according to fixed rules learnt by rote; nor is it, on the other hand, a scientific productive process, which passes from sense to abstract ideas and thoughts, or exercises itself exclusively in the element of pure thinking; rather the spiritual and the sensuous side must in artistic production be as one. For instance, it would be possible in poetical creation to try and proceed by first apprehending the theme to be treated as a prosaic thought, and by then putting it into pictorial ideas, and into rhyme, and so forth; so that the pictorial element would simply be hung upon the abstract reflections as an ornament or decoration. Such a process could only produce bad poetry, for in it there would be operative as two *separate activities* that which in artistic production has its right place only as undivided unity.² This genuine mode of production constitutes the activity of artistic *fancy*.³ It is the rational element which, *qua* spirit, only exists in as far as it actively extrudes itself into consciousness, but yet does not array before it what it bears within itself till it does so in sensuous form. This activity has, therefore, a spiritual import, which, however, it embodies in sensuous shape. Such a process may be compared with the habit even of a man with great experience of the world, or, again, with that of a man of

*esprit*⁴ or wit, who, although he has complete knowledge of the main stakes of life, of the substantive interests that hold men together, of what moves them, and of what is the power that they recognize, yet neither has himself apprehended this content in the form of general rules, nor is able to explain it to others in general reflections, but makes plain to himself and to others what occupies his consciousness always in particular cases, whether real or invented, in adequate instances, and the like. For in his ideas, everything shapes itself into concrete images, determinate in time and place, to which, therefore, names and other external circumstances of all kinds must not be wanting. Yet such a kind of imagination rather rests on the recollection of states that he has gone through, and of experiences that have befallen him, than is creative in its own strength. His recollection preserves and reproduces the individuality and external fashion of occurrences that had such and such results with all their external circumstances, and prevents the universal from emerging in its own shape. But the productive fancy of the *artist* is the fancy of a great mind and heart, the apprehension and creation of ideas and of shapes, and, indeed, the exhibition of the profoundest and most universal human interests in the definite sensuous mould of pictorial representation. From this it follows at once, that in one aspect Fancy unquestionably rests on natural gifts⁵ – speaking generally, on talent – because its mode of production requires a sensuous medium. It is true that we speak in the same way of scientific ‘talent’, but the sciences only presuppose the universal capacity of thought, which has not, like Fancy, a natural mode (as well as an intellectual one), but abstracts just precisely from all that is natural (or native) in an activity; and thus it would be more correct to

say that there is no specifically scientific talent in the sense of a *mere* natural endowment.⁶

Now, Fancy *has* in it a mode of instinct-like productiveness, inasmuch as the essential plasticity and sensuousness of the work of art must be subjectively present in the artist as natural disposition and natural impulse, and, considering that it is unconscious operation, must belong to the natural element in man, as well as to the rational. Of course, natural capacity leaves room for other elements in talent and genius, for artistic production is just as much of a spiritual and self-conscious nature; we can but say that its spirituality must, somehow, have an element of natural, plastic, and formative tendency. For this reason, though nearly everyone can reach a certain point in an art, yet, in order to go beyond this point, with which the art in the strict sense begins, it is impossible to dispense with native artistic talent of the highest order.⁷

Considered as a natural endowment, moreover, such talent reveals itself for the most part in early youth,⁸ and is manifested in the impelling restlessness that busies itself, with vivacity and industry, in creating shapes in some particular sensuous medium, and in seizing on this species of utterance and communication as the only one, or as the chief and the most suitable one. And thus, too, a precocious technical facility, that up to a certain grade of attainment is without effort, is a sign of natural talent. A sculptor finds everything transmute itself into shapes, and he soon begins to take up the clay and model it. And, speaking generally, whatever men of such talents have in their imagination,⁹ whatever rouses and moves their inner nature, turns at once

into shape, drawing, melody, or poem.

[LX] (γ) Thirdly, and to conclude: the *content*¹ of art is also in some respects borrowed from the sensuous, from nature; or, in any case, even if the content is of a spiritual kind, it can only be seized and fixed by representing the spiritual fact, such as human relations, in the shape of phenomena with external reality.

Part II – The End of Art

[LXI] 3. The question then arises, what the interest or the *End*¹ is which man proposes to himself when he reproduces such a content in the form of works of art. This was the third point of view which we set before us with reference to the work of art, and the closer discussion of which will finally make the transition to the actual and true conception of art.

If in this aspect we glance at the common consciousness, a current idea which may occur to us is –

[LXII] (α) The principle of the *imitation of nature*. According to this view the essential purpose of art consists in imitation, in the sense of a facility in copying natural forms as they exist in a way that corresponds precisely to them; and the success of such a representation, exactly corresponding to nature, is supposed to be what affords complete satisfaction.

(α) This definition contains, *prima facie*, nothing beyond the purely formal¹ aim that whatever already exists in the external world, just as it is therein, is now to be made a second time by man as a copy of the former, as well as he can do it with the means at his command. But we may at once regard this repetition as –

($\alpha\alpha$) A *superfluous* labour, seeing that the things which pictures, theatrical representations, etc., imitate and represent – animals, natural scenes, incidents in human life – are before us in other cases already, in our own gardens or our own houses, or in cases within our closer or more remote circle of acquaintance. And, looking more closely, we may regard this superfluous labour as a presumptuous sport which –

($\beta\beta$) Comes far short of nature. For art is restricted in its means of representation; and can produce only *one-sided* deceptions, i.e. for instance, a semblance of reality addressed to one sense only; and in fact, it invariably gives rise, if it rests in the formal purpose of *mere imitation*, to a mere parody² of life, instead of a genuine vitality. Just so the Turks, being Muhammadans, tolerate, as is well known, no pictures copied from men or the like; and when James Bruce, on his journey to Abyssinia, showed paintings of fish to a Turk, the man was amazed at first, but soon enough made answer: ‘If this fish shall rise up against you on the last day, and say, “You have created for me a body, but no living soul”, how will you defend yourself against such an accusation?’³ The prophet, moreover, it is recorded in the Sunna,⁴ said to the two women, Ommi Habiba and Ommi Selma, who told him of pictures in Ethiopian churches – ‘These pictures will accuse their authors on the day of judgement!’

There are, no doubt, as well, examples of completely deceptive imitation. Zeuxis’ painted grapes have from antiquity downward been taken to be the triumph of this principle of the imitation of nature, because the story is that living doves pecked at them.⁵ We might add to this ancient

example the modern one of Büttner's monkey, which bit in pieces a painted cockchafer in Rösel's *Diversions of the Insect World*, and was pardoned by his master, in spite of his having thereby spoilt a beautiful copy of this valuable work, because of this proof of the excellence of the pictures.⁶ But when we reflect on these and similar instances, it must at once occur to us that, in place of commending works of art because they have *actually* deceived *even* pigeons and monkeys, we ought simply to censure the people who mean to exalt a work of art by predicating, as its highest and ultimate quality, so poor an effect as this. In general, we may sum up by saying that, as a matter of mere imitation, art cannot maintain a rivalry with nature, and, if it tries, must look like a worm trying to crawl after an elephant.

(γγ)Considering the unvarying failure – comparative failure, at least – of imitation when contrasted with the original in nature, there remains as end nothing beyond our pleasure in the sleight of hand which can produce something so like nature. And it is doubtless open to man to be pleased at producing over again what is already present in its own right, by his labour, skill, and industry. But enjoyment and admiration, even of this kind, naturally grow frigid or chilled precisely in proportion to the resemblance of the copy to the natural type, or are even converted into tedium and repugnance. There are portraits which, as has been wittily said, are sickeningly like; and Kant⁷ adduces another instance relative to this pleasure in imitation as such, viz. that we soon grow tired of a man – and there are such men – who is able to mimic the nightingale's strain quite perfectly; and as soon as it is discovered that a man is producing the notes, we are at once weary of the song. We then recognize in it nothing but a conjuring trick, neither the free

production of nature, nor a work of art; for we expect from the free productive capacity of human beings something quite other than such music as this, which only interests us when, as is the case with the nightingale's note, it gushes forth from the creature's own vitality without special purpose, and yet recalls the utterance of human feeling. In general, such delight at our skill in mimicking can be but limited, and it becomes man better to take delight in what he produces out of himself. In this sense the invention of any unimportant and technical product has the higher value, and man may be prouder of having invented the hammer, the nail, and so forth, than of achieving feats of mimicry. For this fervour of abstract⁸ copying is to be evened with the feat of the man who had taught himself to throw lentils through a small opening without missing. He displayed this skill of his before Alexander, and Alexander presented him with a bushel of lentils as a reward for his frivolous and meaningless art.

[LXIII] (β) Moreover, seeing that the principle of imitation is purely formal, to make it the end has the result that *objective beauty*¹ itself disappears. For the question is in that case no longer *of what nature* that is which is to be copied, but only whether it is *correctly* copied. The object and content of the beautiful comes then to be regarded as matter of entire indifference. That is to say, if we go outside the principle and speak of a difference of beauty and ugliness in considering beasts, men, landscapes, actions, or characters, this must nevertheless, in presence of the maxim in question,² be set down as a distinction that does not belong particularly to art, for which nothing is left but abstract imitation. In this case the above-mentioned lack of a

criterion in dealing with the endless forms of nature reduces us, as regards the selection of objects and their distinction in beauty and ugliness, to subjective *taste* as an ultimate fact, which accepts no rule and admits of no discussion. And, in fact, if in selecting objects for representation we start from what *men* think beautiful or ugly, and therefore deserving artistic imitation – that is, from their taste – then all circles of natural objects open to us, and not one of them will be likely to fail of a patron. Among men, for instance, it is the case that at any rate every bridegroom thinks his bride beautiful, and indeed, perhaps, he alone; though not, it may be, every husband his wife; and that subjective taste for such beauty has no fixed rule one may hold to be the good fortune of both parties. If we, moreover, look quite beyond individuals and their accidental taste, to the taste of nations, this again is full of extreme diversity and contrast. How often we hear it said that a European beauty would not please a Chinese or even a Hottentot, in as far as the Chinaman has quite a different conception of beauty from the Negro, and the Negro in turn from the European, and so forth. Indeed, if we look at the works of art of those extra-European peoples – their images of the gods, for instance – which their fancy has originated as venerable and sublime, they may appear to us as the most gruesome idols, and their music may sound to our ears as the most horrible noise; while they, on their side, will regard our sculptures, paintings, and musical productions as trivial or ugly.³

[[LXIV](#)] (γ) But even if we abstract from an objective principle of art, and if beauty is to be based on subjective and individual taste, we shall still soon find on the side of art itself that the imitation of nature, which certainly appeared to be a universal principle and one guaranteed by high

authority, is at any rate not to be accepted in this universal and merely abstract form. For if we look at the different arts it will at once be admitted that even if painting and sculpture represent objects which appear like those of nature, or the type of which is essentially borrowed from nature, yet works of architecture on the other hand – and architecture belongs to the fine arts – and the productions of poetry, in as far as they do not confine themselves to mere description, are by no means to be called imitations of nature. At least, if we desired to maintain the principle as valid in the case of these latter arts, we should have to make a long circuit by conditioning the proposition in various ways, and reducing the so-called truth at any rate to probability.¹ But if we admitted probability we should again be met by a great difficulty in determining what is probable and what is not; and still, moreover, one would neither consent nor find it possible to exclude from poetry all wholly arbitrary and completely original imaginations.²

[LXV] The end of art must, therefore, lie in something different from the purely formal imitation of what we find given, which in any case can bring to the birth only *tricks* and not *works* of art. It is, indeed, an element essential to the work of art to have natural shapes for its foundation; seeing that its representation is in the medium of external and therefore of natural phenomena. In painting, for instance, it is an important study to know how to copy with precision the colours in their relations to one another, the effects of light, reflections, etc., and, no less, the forms and figures of objects down to their subtlest characteristics.¹ It is in this respect chiefly that the principle of naturalism in general and of copying nature has recovered its influence in

modern times. Its aim is to recall an art which has grown feeble and indistinct to the vigour and crispness of nature; or, again, to invoke against the purely arbitrary and artificial conventionalism, as unnatural as it was inartistic, into which art had strayed, the uniform, direct, and solidly coherent sequences of nature. But however true it is that there is something right in this endeavour from one point of view, yet still the naturalism at which it aims is not as such the substantive and primary concern that underlies fine art. And, therefore, although external appearance in the shape of natural reality constitutes an essential condition of art, yet, nevertheless, neither is the given natural world its *rule*, nor is the mere imitation of external appearance as external its *end*.

[LXVI] (b) The further question then arises – What is the true content of art, and with what aim is this content to be presented? On this subject our consciousness supplies us with the common opinion that it is the task and aim of art to bring in contact with our sense, our feeling, our inspiration, *all* that finds a place in the mind of man. Art, it is thought, should realize in us that familiar saying, ‘Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto.’¹ Its aim is therefore placed in arousing and animating the slumbering emotions, inclinations, and passions; in filling the *heart*, in forcing the human being, whether cultured or uncultured, to feel the whole range of what man’s soul in its inmost and secret corners has power to experience and to create, and all that is able to move and to stir the human breast in its depths and in its manifold aspects and possibilities; to present as a delight to emotion and to perception all that the mind possesses of real and lofty in its thought and in the Idea – all the splendour of the noble, the eternal, and the true; and no

less to make intelligible misfortune and misery, wickedness and crime; to make men realize the inmost nature of all that is shocking and horrible, as also of all pleasure and delight; and, finally, to set imagination roving in idle toying of fancy, and luxuriating in the seductive spells of sense-stimulating visions. This endlessly varied content, it is held, art is bound to embrace, partly in order to complete the natural experience in which our external existence consists, and partly with the general aim of provoking the passions of our nature, both in order that the experiences of life may not leave us unmoved, and because we desire to attain to a receptivity that welcomes all phenomena. Now, such a stimulus is not given in this sphere by actual experience itself, but can only come by the semblance thereof, by art, that is, deceptively substituting its creations for reality. The possibility of this deception by means of artistic semblance rests on the fact that all reality must, for man, traverse the medium of perception and ideas,² and cannot otherwise penetrate the feelings and the will. In this process it is quite indifferent whether his attention is claimed by immediate external reality, or whether this effect is produced by another means – that is, by images, symbols,³ and ideas, containing or representing *the content* of reality. Man can frame to himself ideas of things that are not actual as though they were actual. Hence it is all the same to our feelings whether external reality or only the semblance of it is the means of bringing in contact with us a situation, a relation, or the import of a life. Either mode suffices to awaken our response to its burden, in grief and in rejoicing, in pathos and in horror, and in traversing the emotions and the passions of wrath, hatred, compassion, of anxiety, fear, love, reverence, and admiration, or of the desire of honour and of

fame.

This awakening of all feelings in us, the dragging of the heart through the whole significance of life, the realization of all such inner movements by means of a presented exterior consisting merely in deception – all this was what, from the point of view which we have been considering, constituted the peculiar and pre-eminent power of art.

Now, as this mode of treatment credits art with the vocation of impressing on the heart and on the imagination good and bad alike, and of strengthening man to the noblest, as of enervating him to the most sensuous and selfish emotions, it follows that the task set before art is still purely formal, and so it would have no certain purpose, but would merely furnish the empty form for every possible kind of significance and content.

[LXVII] (c) It is a fact that art does include this formal side, in that it has power to present every possible subject-matter in artistic dress, before perception and feeling, just exactly as argumentative¹ reflection has the power of manipulating all possible objects and modes of action, and of furnishing them with reasons and justifications. But when we admit so great a variety of content we are at once met by the remark that the manifold feelings and ideas, which art aims at provoking or reinforcing, intersect and contradict, and by mutual interference cancel one another. Indeed, in this aspect, in so far as art inspires men to directly opposite emotions, it only magnifies the contradiction of our feelings and passions, and either sets them staggering like Bacchantes, or passes into sophistry and scepticism, in the same way as argumentation.² This diversity of the material of art itself compels us, therefore, not to be content with so formal³ an

aim for it, seeing that rationality forces its way into this wild diversity, and demands to see the emergence of a higher and more universal purpose from these elements in spite of their self-contradiction, and to be assured of its being attained. Just in the same way the State and the social life of men are, of course, credited with the purpose that in them *all* human capacities and *all* individual powers are to be developed and to find utterance in *all* directions and with *all* tendencies. But in opposition to so formal a view there at once arises the question in what *unity* these manifold formations must be comprehended, and what *single end* they must have for their fundamental idea and ultimate purpose.⁴

As such an end,⁵ reflection soon suggests the notion that art has the capacity and the function of mitigating the fierceness of the desires.

[LXVIII] (α) In respect to this first idea, we have only to ascertain in what feature peculiar to art it is that the capacity lies of eliminating brutality and taming and educating the impulses, desires, and passions. Brutality in general has its reason in a direct selfishness of the impulses, which go to work right away, and exclusively for the satisfaction of their concupiscence. Now, desire is most savage and imperious in proportion as, being isolated and narrow, it occupies the *whole man*, so that he does not retain the power of separating himself as a universal being from this determinateness, and becoming aware of himself as universal.¹ Even if the man in such a case says, 'The passion is stronger than I', it is true that the abstract I is then separated for consciousness from the particular passion; but still only in a formal way, inasmuch as this separation is only made in order to pronounce that, against the power of

passion, the I as such is of no account whatever. The savageness of passion consists, therefore, in the oneness of the I as universal with the limited content of its desires, so that the man has no will outside this particular passion.² Now, such brutality and untamed violence of passion is softened through art, to begin with, by the mere fact that it brings before the man as an idea what in such a state he feels and does.³ And even if art restricts itself to merely setting up pictures of the passions before the mind's eye, or even if it were actually to flatter them, still this is by itself enough to have a softening power, inasmuch as the man is thereby at least *made aware*, of what, apart from such presentation, he simply *is*. For then the man observes his impulses and inclinations, and whereas before they bore him on without power of reflection, he now sees them outside himself, and begins already to be free from them, in so far as they form an object which he contrasts with himself. Hence it may frequently be the case with the artist that when attacked by grief he softens and weakens the intensity of his own feelings in its effect on his own mind by representing it in art.⁴ Tears, even, are enough to bring comfort; the man, who to begin with is utterly sunk and concentrated in grief, is able thus, at any rate, to utter in a direct fashion this his inner state. Still more of a relief, however, is the utterance of what is within in words, images, pictures, sounds, and shapes. For this reason it was a good old custom at deaths and funerals to appoint wailing women, in order to bring the grief before the mind in its utterance. Manifestations of sympathy, too, hold up the content of man's misfortune to his view; when it is much talked about he is forced to reflect upon it, and is thereby relieved. And so it has always been held that to weep or to speak one's fill is a means to obtain

freedom from the oppressive weight of care, or at least to find momentary relief for the heart. Hence the mitigation of the violence of passion has for its universal reason that man is released from his immediate sunkenness in a feeling, and becomes conscious of it as of something external to him, towards which he must now enter into an *ideal* relation. Art, by means of its representations, while remaining within the sensuous sphere, delivers man at the same time from the power of sensuousness.

Of course we may often hear those favourite phrases about man's duty being to remain in immediate oneness with nature, but such oneness in its abstraction is simply and solely coarseness and savagery; and art, in the very process of dissolving this oneness for man, is raising him with gentle hand above and away from mere sunkenness in nature. Man's mode of occupying himself with works of art is always purely contemplative,⁵ and educates thereby, in the first place, no doubt, merely attention to the representations themselves, but then, going beyond this, it cultivates attention to their significance, the power of comparison with other contents, and receptivity for the general consideration of them, and for the points of view which it involves.⁶

[[LXIX](#)] (β) To the above there attaches itself in natural connection the second characteristic which has been ascribed to art as its essential purpose, viz. the *purification* of the passions, instruction and *moral* perfecting. For the characteristic that art was to bridle savageness and educate the passions remained quite abstract and general, so that a question must again arise about a *determinate* kind and an essential *end* of this education.¹

(*αα*) The doctrine of the purification of passion suffers indeed under the same defect² as the above doctrine of the mitigation of the desires; yet, when more closely looked at, it at any rate arrives at the point of accentuating the fact that the representations of art may be held to lack a standard by which their worth or unworthiness could be measured. This standard simply means their effectiveness in separating pure from impure in the passions. It therefore requires a content that has capacity to exercise this purifying power, and, in as far as the production of such an effect is taken to constitute the substantive end of art, it must follow that the purifying content must be brought before consciousness in its *universality* and *essentiality*.³

(*ββ*) In this latter aspect the end of art has been pronounced to be that it should *teach*. Thus, on the one side, the peculiar character of art would consist in the movement of the emotions and in the satisfaction which lies in this movement, even in fear, compassion, in painful pathos and shock – that is to say, in the satisfying engagement of the emotions and passions, and to that extent in a complacency, entertainment, and delight in the objects of art, in their representation and effect; but, on the other side, this purpose (of art) is held to find its higher standard only in its instructiveness, in *the fabula docet*,⁴ and thus in the useful influence which the work of art succeeds in exerting on the subject.⁵ In this respect the Horatian saw,⁶ ‘*Et prodesse volunt et delectare poetae*’ (‘Poets aim at utility and entertainment alike’), contains, concentrated in a few words, all that has subsequently been elaborated in infinite degrees, and diluted into the uttermost extreme of insipidity as a doctrine of art. As regards such instruction we have,

then, to ask, whether it is meant to be directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly contained in the work of art.

If, speaking generally, we are concerned about a purpose which is universal and not contingent, it follows that this purpose, considering the essentially spiritual nature of art, cannot but be itself spiritual, and indeed, moreover, one which is not contingent,⁷ but actual in its nature and for its own sake.⁸ Such a purpose in relation to teaching could only consist in bringing before consciousness, by help of the work of art, a really and explicitly significant spiritual content.⁹ From this point of view it is to be asserted that the higher art ranks itself, the more it is bound to admit into itself such a content as this, and that only in the essence of such a content can it find the standard which determines whether what is expressed is appropriate or inappropriate.¹⁰ Art was, in fact, the first *instructress* of peoples.¹¹

But the purpose of instruction may be treated as *purpose*, to such a degree that the universal nature of the represented content is doomed to be exhibited and expounded directly and obviously as abstract proposition, prosaic reflection, or general theorem, and not merely in an indirect way in the concrete form of a work of art. By such a severance the sensuous plastic form, which is just what makes the work of art a work of *art*, becomes a mere otiose accessory, a husk which is expressly pronounced to be mere husk, a semblance expressly pronounced to be mere semblance. But thereby the very nature of the work of art is distorted. For the work of art ought to bring a content before the mind's eye, not in its generality as such, but with this generality made absolutely individual, and sensuously particularized. If the work of art does not proceed from this principle, but sets in relief its

generalized aspect with the purpose of abstract instruction, then the imaginative and sensuous aspect is only an external and superfluous adornment, and the work of art is a thing divided against itself,¹² in which form and content no longer appear as grown into one. In that case the sensuously individual and the spiritually general are become external to one another.¹³

And further, if the purpose of art is limited to this *didactic* utility, then its other aspect, that of pleasure, entertainment, and delight, is pronounced to be in itself *unessential*, and ought to have its substance merely in the utility of the teaching on which it is attendant. But this amounts to pronouncing that art does not bear its vocation and purpose in itself, but that its conception is rooted in something else, to which it is a *means*. Art is, in this case, only one among the several means which prove useful and are applied for the purpose of instruction.¹⁴ This brings us to the boundary at which art is made no longer to be an end on its own merits, seeing that it is degraded into a mere toy of entertainment or a mere means of instruction.¹⁵

[LXX] (γγ) This boundary becomes most sharply marked¹ when a question is raised, in its turn, about a supreme end and aim for the sake of which the passions are to be purified and men are to be instructed. This aim has often, in modern times, been declared to be *moral* improvement, and the aim of art has been placed in the function of preparing the inclinations and impulses for moral perfection, and of leading them to this goal. This idea combines purification with instruction, inasmuch as art is, by communicating an insight into genuine moral goodness – that is, by instruction – at the same time to incite to purification, and in this way

alone to bring about the improvement of mankind as its useful purpose and supreme goal.

Regarding art in reference to moral improvement, the same has *prima facie* to be said as about the didactic purpose. We may readily grant that art must not as a principle take for its aim the immoral and its furtherance. But it is one thing to take immorality for the express aim of representation, and another to abstain from taking morality. Every genuine work of art may have a good moral drawn from it, but, of course, in doing so much depends on interpretation and on him who draws the moral. Thus one may hear the most immoral representations defended by saying that we must know evil, or sin, in order to act morally; and, conversely, it has been said that the portrayal of Mary Magdalene, the beautiful sinner who afterwards repented, has seduced many into sin, because art makes it look so beautiful to repent, and you must sin before you can repent. But the doctrine of moral improvement, if consistently carried out, goes in general yet further. It would not be satisfied with the possibility of extracting a moral from a work of art by interpretation, but it would, on the contrary, display the moral instruction as the substantive purpose of the work of art, and, indeed, would actually admit to portrayal none but moral subjects, moral characters, actions, and incidents. For art has the choice among its subjects, in contradistinction to history or the sciences which have their matter fixed for them.

[LXXI] In order that we may be able to form a thoroughly adequate estimate of the idea that the aim of art is moral from this point of view, we must inquire first of all for the definite standpoint of the morality on which this doctrine is based. If we look closely at the standpoint of morality as we

have to understand it in the best sense at the present day, we soon find that its conception does not immediately coincide with what apart from it we are in the habit of calling in a general way virtue, respectability,¹ uprightness, etc. To be respectable and virtuous is not enough to make a man moral.² Morality involves *reflection* and the definite consciousness of that which duty prescribes, and acting out of such a prior consciousness. Duty itself is the law of the will, which man nevertheless lays down freely out of his own self, and then is supposed to determine himself to this duty for duty's and its fulfilment's sake, by doing good solely from the conviction which he has attained that it is the good. Now this law, the duty which is chosen for duty's sake to be the guide of action, out of free conviction and the inner conscience, and is then acted upon, is, taken by itself,³ the abstract universal of the will, and is the direct antithesis of nature, the sensuous impulses, the self-seeking interests, the passions, and of all that is comprehensively entitled the feelings and the heart. In this antagonism the one side is regarded as *negating* the other; and, seeing that both are present as antagonists within the subject (person), he has, as determining himself out of himself, the choice of following the one or the other. But, according to the view under discussion, a *moral* aspect is acquired by such a decision, and by the act performed in accordance with it, only through the free conviction of duty on the one hand, and, on the other hand, through the conquest, not only of the particular or separate will, of the natural motives, inclinations, passions, etc., but also through that of the nobler emotions and the higher impulses. For the modern moralistic view starts from the fixed antithesis⁴ of the will in its spiritual universality to its sensuous natural particularity,⁵ and consists not in the

completed reconciliation of these contrasted sides, but in their conflict with one another, which involves the requirement that the impulses which conflict with duty ought to yield to it.

[LXXII](#) This antithesis does not merely display itself for our consciousness, in the limited region of moral action;¹ but also emerges as a fundamental distinction and antagonism between that which is real essentially and in its own right, and that which is external reality and existence.² Formulated in the abstract, it is the contrast of the universal and particular, when the former is explicitly fixed over against the latter, just as the latter is over against the former;³ more concretely, it appears in nature as the opposition of the abstract law against the abundance of individual phenomena, each having its own character; in the mind, as the sensuous and spiritual in man, as the battle of the spirit against the flesh, of duty for duty's sake, the cold command, with the individual interest, the warm feelings, the sensuous inclinations and impulses, the individual disposition as such; as the hard conflict of inward freedom and of natural necessity; further, as the contradiction of the dead conception – empty in itself – compared with full concrete vitality, or of theory and subjective thought contrasted with objective existence and experience.

[LXXIII](#) These are antitheses which have not been invented, either by the subtlety of reflection or by the pedantry of philosophy, but which have from all time and in manifold forms preoccupied and disquieted the human consciousness, although it was modern culture¹ that elaborated them most distinctly, and forced them up to the point of most unbending contradiction. Intellectual culture and the modern

play of understanding² create in man this contrast, which makes him an amphibious animal, inasmuch as it sets him to live in two contradictory worlds at once; so that even consciousness wanders back and forward in this contradiction, and, shuttlecocked from side to side, is unable to satisfy itself *as itself* on the one side as on the other. For, on the one side, we see man a prisoner in common reality and earthly temporality, oppressed by want and poverty, hard driven by nature, entangled in matter, in sensuous aims and their enjoyments; on the other side, he exalts himself to eternal ideas, to a realm of thought and freedom, imposes on himself as a *will* universal laws and attributions,³ strips the world of its living and flourishing reality and dissolves it into abstractions, inasmuch as the mind is put upon⁴ vindicating its rights and its dignity simply by denying the rights of nature and maltreating it, thereby retaliating the oppression and violence which itself has experienced from nature. Such a discrepancy in life and consciousness involves for modern culture and its understanding the demand that the contradiction should be resolved. Yet the understanding cannot release itself from the fixity of these antitheses. The solution, therefore, remains for consciousness a mere *ought*, and the present and reality only stir themselves in the unrest of a perpetual to and fro, which seeks a reconciliation without finding it. Then the question arises, whether such a many-sided and fundamental opposition which never gets beyond a mere ought and a postulated solution, can be the genuine and complete truth,⁵ and, in general, the supreme purpose. If the culture of the world has fallen into such a contradiction, it becomes the task of philosophy to undo or cancel it, i.e. to show that neither the one alternative in its abstraction nor the other in similar one-sidedness possesses

truth, but that they are essentially self-dissolving; that truth only lies in the conciliation and mediation of the two, and that this mediation is no mere postulate, but is in its nature and in reality accomplished and always self-accomplishing.⁶ This intuition agrees directly with the natural faith and will, which always has present to the mind's eye precisely this resolved antithesis, and in action makes it its purpose and achieves it. All that philosophy does is to furnish a reflective insight into the essence of the antithesis in as far as it shows that what constitutes truth is merely the resolution of this antithesis, and that not in the sense that the conflict and its aspects in any way *are not*, but in the sense that they *are*, in *reconciliation*.⁷

[LXXIV] (d) Now, as an ultimate aim implied a higher standpoint in the case of moral improvement, we shall have to vindicate this higher standpoint for art no less than for morals.¹ Thereby we at once lay aside the false position, which has already been remarked upon, that art has to serve as a means for moral ends, and to conduce to the moral end of the world, as such, by instruction and moral improvement, and thereby has its substantive aim, not in itself, but in something else.² If, therefore, we now continue to speak of an aim or purpose, we must, in the first instance, get rid of the perverse idea, which, in asking 'What is the aim?' retains the accessory meaning of the question, 'What is the *use*?' The perverseness of this lies in the point that the work of art would then be regarded as aspiring to something else which is set before consciousness as the essential and as what ought to be; so that then the work of art would only have value as a useful instrument in the realization of an end having substantive importance *outside* the sphere of

art.³ Against this it is necessary to maintain that art has the vocation of revealing *the truth* in the form of sensuous artistic shape, of representing the reconciled antithesis just described, and, therefore, has its purpose in itself, in this representation and revelation.⁴ For other objects, such as instruction, purification, improvement, pecuniary gain, endeavour after fame and honour, have nothing to do with the work of art as such, and do not determine its conception.⁵

[LXXV] It is from this point of view, into which *reflective* consideration¹ of the matter resolves itself, that we have to apprehend the idea² of art in its inner necessity, as indeed it was from this point of view, historically speaking, that the true appreciation and understanding of art took its origin. For that antithesis, of which we spoke, made itself felt, not only within general reflective culture,³ but no less in philosophy as such, and it was not till philosophy discovered how to overcome this antithesis absolutely that it grasped its own conception⁴ and, just in as far as it did so, the conception of nature and of art.

Hence this point of view, as it is the reawakening of philosophy in general, so also is the reawakening of the science of art; and, indeed, it is this reawakening to which alone aesthetic as a science owes its true origin, and art its higher estimation.⁵

CHAPTER IV

Historical Deduction of the True Idea¹ of Art in Modern Philosophy

[LXXVI] I shall touch briefly upon the historical side of the transition above alluded to, partly for its historical interest, partly because, in doing so, we shall more closely indicate the critical points² which are important, and on the foundation of which we mean to continue our structure. In its most general formulation, this basis consists in recognizing artistic beauty as one of the means³ which resolve and reduce to unity the above antithesis and contradiction between the abstract self-concentrated mind and actual nature, whether that of external phenomena, or the inner subjective feelings and emotions.

[LXXVII] I. The Kantian philosophy led the way by not merely feeling the lack of this point of union, but attaining definite knowledge of it, and bringing it within the range of our ideas.¹ In general, Kant treated as his foundation for the intelligence² as for the will,³ the self-related rationality or freedom, the self-consciousness that finds and knows itself in itself as infinite.⁴ This knowledge of the absoluteness of reason in itself which has brought philosophy to its turning-

point in modern times, this absolute beginning, deserves recognition even if we pronounce Kant's philosophy inadequate, and is an element in it which cannot be refuted. But, in as far as Kant fell back again into the fixed antithesis of subjective thought and objective things,⁵ of the abstract universality and the sensuous individuality of the will,⁶ it was he more especially who strained to the highest possible pitch the above-mentioned contradiction called morality,⁷ seeing that he moreover exalted the practical side of the mind above the theoretical. In presence of this fixed antithesis, with its fixity acknowledged by the understanding, he had no course open but to propound the unity merely in the form of subjective ideas of the reason to which no adequate reality could be shown to correspond,⁸ or again, to treat it as consisting in postulates which might indeed be deduced from the practical reason, but whose essential nature was not for him knowable by thought, and whose practical accomplishment remained a mere ought deferred to infinity.⁹ Thus, then, Kant no doubt brought the reconciled contradiction within the range of our ideas, but he succeeded neither in scientifically unfolding its genuine essence nor in presenting it as the true and sole reality. Kant indeed pressed on still further, inasmuch as he recognized the required unity in what he called the *intuitive understanding* ; but here, again, he comes to a standstill in the contradiction of subjectivity and objectivity, so that although he suggests in the abstract a solution of the contradiction of concept and reality, universality and particularity, understanding and sense, and thereby points to the Idea, yet, on the other hand, he makes this solution and reconciliation itself a purely *subjective* one, not one which is true and actual in its nature and on its own

merits.¹⁰ In this respect the Critique of the power of judgement,¹¹ in which he treats of the aesthetic and teleological¹² powers of judgement, is instructive and remarkable. The beautiful objects of nature and art, the rightly adapted¹³ products of nature, by connecting which Kant is led to a closer treatment of organic and animated beings, are regarded by him only from the point of view of the reflection which subjectively judges of them. Indeed Kant defines the power of judgement generally as 'the power of thinking the particular as contained under the universal' and he calls the power of judgement *reflective* 'when it has only the particular given to it, and has to find the universal under which it comes'. To this end it requires a law, a principle, which it has to impose upon itself; and Kant suggests as this law that of *Teleology*.¹⁴ In the idea of freedom that belongs to the practical reason, the accomplishment of the end is left as a mere 'ought', but in the teleological judgement dealing with animated beings, Kant hits on the notion of regarding the living organism in the light that in it the idea,¹⁵ the universal, contains the particulars as well. Thus in its capacity as end, it determines the particular and external, the structure of the limbs, not from without, but from within, and in the sense that the particular conforms to the end *spontaneously*. Yet even in such a judgement, again, we are supposed not to know the objective nature of the thing, but only to be enunciating a subjective mode of reflection.¹⁶ Similarly, Kant understands the *aesthetic* judgement as neither proceeding from the understanding as such *qua* the faculty of ideas, nor from sensuous perception as such with its manifold variety, but from the free play of the understanding and of the imagination.¹⁷ It is in this free

agreement of the faculties of knowledge that the thing is related to the subject or person, and to his feeling of pleasure and complacency.

[LXXVIII](a) Now this complacency is, in the first place, to be devoid of any interest, i.e., *devoid of relation to our appetitive faculty*. If we have an interest, by way of curiosity for instance, or a sensuous interest on behalf of our sensuous want, a desire of possession and use, then the objects are not important to us for their own sake, but for the sake of our want. In that case, what exists has a value only with reference to such a want, and the relation is of such a kind that the object is on the one side, and on the other stands an attribution¹ which is distinct from the object, but to which we relate it. If, for instance, I consume the object in order to nourish myself by it, this interest lies only in me, and remains foreign to the object itself. Now, what Kant asserts is that the relation to the beautiful is not of this kind. The aesthetic judgement allows the external existence to subsist free and independent,² giving licence to the object to have its end in itself. This is, as we saw above, an important consideration.³

[LXXIX](b) The beautiful, in *the second place*, says Kant,¹ is definable as that which, without a conception, i.e. without a category of the understanding, is perceived as the object of a *universal* delight.² To estimate the beautiful requires a cultivated mind; the natural man has no judgement about the beautiful, seeing that this judgement claims universal validity. The universal is, indeed to begin with, *as such* an abstraction; but that which in itself and on its own merits is true bears in itself the attribution and the claim to be valid

even universally.³ In this sense the beautiful, too, ought to be *universally* recognized, although the mere conceptions of the understanding are competent to no judgement thereupon. The good, that, for instance, which is right in particular actions, is subsumed under universal conceptions, and the act passes for good when it succeeds in corresponding to these conceptions. Beauty, on the other hand, according to the theory, should awaken a universal delight directly, without any such relation.⁴ This amounts to nothing else than that, in contemplating beauty, we are not conscious of the conception and of the subsumption under it, and do not permit to take place the severance of the individual object and of the universal conception which in all other cases is present in the judgement.⁵

[\[LXXX\]](#)(c) In the *third* place, the beautiful (Kant says) has the form of teleology, in as far as a teleological character¹ is perceived in the object without the idea of an end.² At bottom this only repeats the view which we have just discussed.³ Any natural production, i.e. a plant or an animal, is organized teleologically, and is so immediately a datum to us in this its teleology that we have no separate abstract idea of the end, distinct from its given reality. It is in this way that even *the beautiful* is to be displayed to us as teleological. In finite teleology⁴ end and means remain external to one another, inasmuch as the end stands in no essential inner relation to the material medium of its accomplishment. In this case, the idea of the end in its abstraction distinguishes itself from the object in which the end appears as realized. The beautiful, on the other hand, exists as teleological in itself, without means and end revealing themselves in it as distinct aspects. For instance,

the purpose of the limbs of an organism is the vitality which exists as actual in the limbs themselves; separately they cease to be limbs.⁵ For in the living thing the end and the material medium of the end are so directly united that the existing being only exists so long as its purpose dwells in it. The beautiful, Kant maintains,⁶ when considered from this point of view, does not wear its teleology as an external form attached to it; but the teleological correspondence of the inner and outer is the immanent nature of the beautiful object.

[LXXXI](#)(d) Lastly, Kant's treatment determines the beautiful, in the *fourth* place, as being recognized, without a conception, as object of a *necessary* delight.¹ Necessity is an abstract category, and indicates an inner essential relation of two aspects; *if* the one is, and *because* the one is, *then (and therefore)* the other is. The one in its nature involves the other as well as itself, just as cause, e.g., has no meaning without effect.² The delight which the beautiful involves is such a necessary consequence, wholly without relation to conceptions, i.e. to categories of the understanding.³ Thus, for instance, we are pleased no doubt by what is symmetrical, and this is constructed in accordance with a conception of the understanding. But Kant requires, to give us pleasure, even more than the unity and equality that belong to such a conception of the understanding.⁴

[LXXXII](#) Now, what we find in all these Kantian laws is a non-severance of that which in all other cases is presupposed in our consciousness to be distinct. In the beautiful this severance finds itself cancelled, inasmuch as universal and particular, end and means, conception and object thoroughly

interpenetrate one another. And thus, again, Kant regards the beautiful in *art* as an agreement in which the particular itself is in accordance with the conception.¹ Particulars, as such, are *prima facie* contingent, both as regards one another and as regards the universal, and this very contingent element, sense, feeling, temper, inclination, is now in the beauty of art not merely *subsumed* under universal categories of the understanding and *controlled* by the conception of freedom² in its abstract universality, but so united with the universal that it reveals itself as inwardly and in its nature and realization adequate thereto.³ By this means the beauty of art becomes embodiment of a thought, and the material is not externally determined by this thought, but exists itself in its freedom.⁴ For in this case the natural, sensuous, the feelings and so forth have *in themselves* proportion, purpose, and agreement; while perception and feeling are exalted into spiritual universality, and thought itself, not content with renouncing its hostility to nature, finds cheerfulness therein. Thus feeling, pleasure, and enjoyment are justified and sanctified, so that nature and freedom, sensuousness and the idea,⁵ find their warrant and their satisfaction all in *one*. Yet even this apparently complete reconciliation is ultimately inferred to be, nevertheless, merely subjective in respect of our appreciation as in respect of our production, and not to be the naturally and completely true and real.⁶

These we may take as the main results of the Kantian Criticism,⁷ so far as they have interest for us in our present inquiry. This criticism forms the starting-point for the true conception of artistic beauty. Yet this conception had to overcome the Kantian defects before it could assert itself as

the higher grasp of the true unity of necessity and freedom, of the particular and the universal, of the sensuous and the rational.

[LXXXIII] 2. And so it must be admitted that the artistic sense of a profound, and, at the same time, philosophic mind was beforehand with philosophy as such,¹ in demanding and enunciating the principle of totality and reconciliation as against that abstract endlessness of reflective thought,² that duty for duty's sake, that intelligence devoid of plastic shape, which apprehend³ nature and reality, sensation and feeling as a mere *limit*, and as an absolutely hostile element. For *Schiller* must be credited with the great merit of having broken through the Kantian subjectivity and abstractness of thought, and having dared the attempt to transcend these limits by intellectually grasping the principles of unity and reconciliation as the truth, and realizing them in art.⁴ Schiller, in his aesthetic discussions, did not simply adhere to art and its interest without concerning himself about its relation to philosophy proper, but compared his interest in artistic beauty with the principles of philosophy; and it was only by starting from the latter, and by their help that he penetrated the profounder nature and notion of the beautiful. Thus we feel it to be a feature in one period of his works that he has busied himself with thought – more perhaps than was conducive to their unsophisticated beauty as works of art. The intentional character of abstract reflection and even the interest of the philosophical idea⁵ are noticeable in many of his poems. This has been made a ground of censure against him, especially by way of blaming and depreciating him in comparison with Goethe's agreeable straightforwardness and objectivity.⁶ But in this respect

Schiller, as poet, did but pay the debt of his time; and the reason lay in a perplexity which turned out only to the honour of that sublime soul and profound character, and to the profit of science and cognition.

[LXXXIV] At the same epoch the same scientific stimulus withdrew Goethe, too, from poetry, his proper sphere. Yet just as Schiller immersed himself in the study of the inner depths of the *mind*, so Goethe's idiosyncrasy led him to the *physical* side of art, to external nature, to animal and vegetable organisms, to crystals, to cloud formation, and to colour. To such scientific research Goethe brought the power of his great mind, which in these regions put to rout¹ the science of mere understanding with its errors, just as Schiller, on the other side, succeeded in asserting the idea of the free totality of beauty against the understanding's science² of volition and thought. A whole set of Schiller's productions is devoted to this insight of his into the nature of art, especially the 'Letters upon Aesthetic Education'.³ In these letters the central point from which Schiller starts is that every individual human being has within him the capacity of an ideal humanity. This genuine human being, he says, is represented by the State,⁴ which he takes to be the objective, universal, or, so to speak, normal⁵ form in which the diversity of particular subjects or persons aims at aggregating and combining itself into a unity. There were, then, he considered, two imaginable ways in which the human being in time (in the actual course of events) might coincide with the human being in the Idea: on the one hand, by the State, *qua* genus or class-idea of morality,⁶ law, and intelligence, destroying individuality; on the other hand, by the individual raising himself to the level of his genus, i.e. by

the human being that lives in time ennobling himself into the human being of the Idea. Now reason, he thinks, demands unity as such, the generic character, but nature demands diversity and individuality; and both these legislative authorities have simultaneous claims on man. In presence of the conflict between these antagonistic elements, aesthetic education simply consists in realizing the requirement of mediation and reconciliation between them. For the aim of this education is, according to Schiller, to give such form to inclination, sensuousness, impulse, and heart, that they may become rational in themselves, and by the same process reason, freedom, and spirituality may come forward out of their abstraction and uniting with the natural element, now rationalized throughout, may in it be invested with flesh and blood. Beauty is thus pronounced to be the unification of the rational and the sensuous, and this unification to be the genuinely real.⁷

This notion of Schiller's may be readily recognized in the general views of *Anmuth und Würde*,⁸ and in his poems more particularly from the fact that he makes the praise of women his subject matter; because it was in their character that he recognized and held up to notice the spontaneously present combination of the spiritual and natural.

[LXXXV] Now this *Unity* of the universal and particular, of freedom and necessity, of the spiritual and the natural, which Schiller grasped from a scientific point of view¹ as the principle and essence of art, and laboured indefatigably to evoke into actual existence by help of art and aesthetic culture, was considered, by a further advance, as *the Idea*² *itself*, and was thus constituted the principle of knowledge and of existence, while the Idea in this sense was recognized

as the sole truth and reality. By means of this recognition, science, in Schelling's philosophy, attained its absolute standpoint, and although art had previously begun to assert its peculiar nature and dignity in relation to the highest interests of humanity, yet it was now that the actual *notion*³ of art and its place in scientific theory were discovered. Art was now accepted, even if erroneously in one respect, which this is not the place to discuss, yet in its higher and genuine vocation.⁴ No doubt before this time so early a writer as Winckelmann had been inspired by his observation of the ideals of the ancients in a way that led him to develop a new sense for the contemplation of art, to rescue it from the notions of commonplace aims and of mere mimicry of nature, and to exert an immense influence in favour of searching out the idea of art in the works of art and in its history. For Winckelmann should be regarded as one of the men who have succeeded in furnishing the mind with a new organ and new methods of study in the field of art. On the theory, however, and the scientific knowledge of art his view has had less influence.⁵

[LXXXVI]3. To touch briefly on the further course of the subject, A.W. and Friedrich von Schlegel,¹ in proximity to the renaissance of philosophy, being covetous of novelty and with a thirst for what was striking and extraordinary, appropriated as much of the philosophical idea as their natures, which were anything but philosophical, and essentially of the critical² stamp, were capable of absorbing. Neither of them can claim the reputation of a speculative thinker. But it was they who, armed with their critical understanding, set themselves somewhere near the standpoint of the Idea, and with great plainness of speech

and audacity of innovation, though with but a poor admixture of philosophy, directed a clever polemic against the traditional views. And thus they undoubtedly introduced in several branches of art a new standard of judgement in conformity with notions which were higher than those that they attacked. As, however, their criticism was not accompanied by the thorough philosophical comprehension of their standard, this standard retained a character of indefiniteness and vacillation, with the result that they sometimes did too much and sometimes too little. No doubt they are to be credited with the merit of bringing afresh to light and extolling in a loving spirit much that was held obsolete and was inadequately esteemed by their age, e.g. the work of the older painters of Italy and the Netherlands, the 'Nibelungen Lied',³ etc.; and, again, they endeavoured with zeal to learn and to teach subjects that were little known, such as the Indian poetry and mythology.⁴ Nevertheless, they attributed too high a value to the productions of such epochs, and sometimes themselves fell into the blunder of admiring what was but mediocre, e.g. Holberg's comedies,⁵ and attaching a universal importance to what had only relative value, or even boldly showing themselves enthusiasts for a perverse tendency and subordinate standpoint as if it were something supreme.

[LXXXVII] Out of this tendency, and especially out of the sentiments and doctrines of Fried, von Schlegel, there further grew in all its manifold shapes the so-called *Irony*.¹ This idea had its deeper root, if we take it in one of its aspects, in Fichte's philosophy, in so far as the principles of his philosophy were applied to art.² Fried, von Schlegel, as also Schelling, started from Fichte's point of view: Schelling, to

pass wholly beyond it,³ Fried, von Schlegel to develop it in a peculiar fashion, and to tear himself loose from it. As regards the intimate connection of Fichte's principles with one tendency (among others) of the irony, we need only lay stress on the following point, that Fichte establishes the I as the absolute principle of all knowledge, of all reason and cognition;⁴ and that in the sense of the I which is, and is no more than, utterly abstract and formal.⁵ For this reason, in the second place, this I is in itself absolutely simple, and, on the one hand, every characteristic, every attribute, every content is negated therein – for every positive matter is annihilated by absorption into this abstract freedom and unity; on the other side, every content which is to be of value for the I is given position and recognition only by favour of the I.⁶ Whatever is, is only by favour of the I,⁷ and what is by my favour I am in turn able to annihilate.

[LXXXVIII] Now, if we abide by these utterly empty forms which have their origin in the absoluteness of the abstract I, then nothing has value in its real and actual nature, and regarded in itself, but only as produced by the subjectivity of the I. But if so, it follows that the I is able to remain lord and master of everything, and in no sphere of morality or legality, of things human or divine, profane or sacred,¹ is there anything that would not have to begin by being given position by the I, and that might not, therefore, just as well be in turn annihilated thereby. This amounts to making all that is actual in its own right a mere *semblance*,² not true and real for its own sake and by its own means, but a mere appearance due to the I, within whose power and caprice it remains, and at its free disposal. To admit it or to annihilate it stands purely in the pleasure of the I which has attained

absoluteness in itself and simply as I.

[LXXXIX] In the third place,¹ then, the I is a *living*, active individual, and its life consists in bringing its individuality to its own consciousness as to that of others, in uttering itself and taking shape in phenomena. For every human being while he lives seeks to realize himself, and does realize himself.² With respect to beauty and art this receives the meaning of living as artist and forming one's life *artistically*.³ But, according to the principle before us, I live as artist when all my action and utterance in general, whenever it has to do with any content, is for me on the level of mere *semblance*, and assumes a shape which is wholly in my power.⁴ So I am not really in *earnest*, either about this content, or generally, about its utterance and realization. For genuine earnest comes into being only by means of a substantial interest, a matter that has something in it, truth, morality, and so forth; by means of a content which, as such (without my help) is enough to have value for me as something essential, so that I myself only become essential in my own eyes in as far as I have immersed myself in such a matter and have come to be in conformity with it in my whole knowledge and action. At the standpoint according to which the artist is the I that binds and looses of its own power, for whom no content of consciousness counts as absolute and as essentially real, but only as itself an artificial and dissoluble semblance, such earnest can never come into being, as nothing has validity ascribed to it but the formalism of the I. By others, indeed, my self-display in which I present myself to them may be taken seriously, inasmuch as they interpret me as though I were really concerned about the matter in hand; but therein they are

simply deceived, poor *borné*⁵ creatures, without talent and capacity to apprehend and to attain my standpoint. And this shows me that not everyone is so free (formally⁶ free, that is) as to see in all that usually has value, dignity, and sanctity for mankind, simply a product of his own power of caprice, whereby he is able to set his seal on the value of such matters, and to determine himself and obtain a content by their means, or not. And then this skill in living an ironical artist life apprehends itself as a *God-like geniality*,⁷ for which every possible thing is a mere dead creature, to which the free creator, knowing himself to be wholly unattached, feels in no way bound, seeing that he can annihilate as well as create it. He who has attained such a standpoint of God-like geniality looks down in superiority on all mankind besides, for they are pronounced *borné* and dull in as far as law, morality, and so forth retain for them their fixed, obligatory, and essential validity. And the individual who thus lives his artist life assigns himself indeed relation to others, lives with friends, mistresses, etc., but as genius he sets no value on this relation to his determinate reality and particular actions, or to what is universal in its own right; that is, he assumes an ironical attitude towards it.

This is the universal import of the genial God-like irony, as that concentration of the I into itself for which all bonds are broken, and which will only endure to live in the bliss of self-enjoyment.⁸ This irony was the invention of Herr Fried, von Schlegel, and many followed him in prating about it then, or are prating of it afresh just now.

[XC] The proximate¹ form of this negativity which displays itself as irony is, then, on the one hand the futility² of all

that is matter of fact, or moral and of substantive import in itself; the nothingness of all that is objective, and that has essential and actual value. If the I remains at this point of view, all appears to it as nothing worth and as futile, excepting its own subjectivity, which thereby becomes hollow and empty, and itself mere conceit. But on the other hand, the reverse may happen, and the I may also find itself unsatisfied in its enjoyment of itself, and may prove insufficient to itself, so as in consequence to feel a craving for the solid and substantial, for determinate and essential interests. Out of this there arises misfortune and antinomy, in that the subject desires to penetrate into truth and has a craving for objectivity, but yet is unable to abandon its isolation and retirement into itself, and to strip itself free of this unsatisfied abstract inwardness (of mind), and so has a seizure of sickly yearning which we have also seen emanate from Fichte's school.³ The discontent of this quiescence and feebleness – which does not like to act or to touch anything for fear of surrendering its inward harmony, and, for all its craving after the absolute, remains none the less unreal and empty, even though pure in itself – is the source of morbid saintliness⁴ and yearning. For a true saintly soul acts and is a reality. But all that craving is the feeling of the nullity of the empty futile subject or person, which lacks the strength to escape this its futility, and to fill⁵ itself with something of substantial value.

[XCI] In so far, however, as the Irony was treated as a form of art, it did not content itself with conferring artistic shape upon the life and particular individuality of the artist. In addition to the works of art presented by his own actions, etc., the artist was bound to produce external works of art as

creations of his fancy. The principle of these productions, which for the most part can only come to the birth in poetical form,¹ is, in due course,² the representation of the Divine as the Ironical.³ The ironical, as 'genial' individuality, consists in the self-annihilation of what is noble, great, and excellent; and thus even the objective shapes of art will have to represent the mere principle of absolute subjectivity, by displaying what has value and nobleness for man as null in its self-annihilation.⁴ This implies, not merely that we are not to be serious about the right, the moral, and the true, but that the highest and best of all has nothing in it, inasmuch as in its exhibition through individuals, characters, and actions, it refutes and annihilates itself, and so is irony at its own expense. This mode, taken in the abstract, borders closely on the principle of comedy; but yet within this affinity the comic must be essentially distinguished from the ironical. For the comic must be limited to bringing to nothing what is in itself null, a false and self-contradictory phenomenon; for instance, a whim, a perversity, or particular caprice, set over against a mighty passion; or even a *supposed* reliable principle or rigid maxim may be shown to be null. But it is quite another thing when what is in reality moral and true, any substantial content as such, exhibits itself as null in an individual and by his means. Such an individual is then null and despicable in character, and weakness and want of character are thus introduced into the representation.⁵ In this distinction between the ironical and the comic it is therefore an essential question what import that has which is brought to nothing. In the case supposed they are wretched worthless subjects, persons destitute of the power to abide by their fixed and essential purpose, but ready to surrender it and let it be destroyed in them.⁶ The 'Irony' loves this irony

of the characterless. For true character involves on the one hand an essential import in its purpose; on the other hand, adherence to that purpose, such that the individuality would be robbed of its whole existence if forced to desist from and to abandon it. This stability and substance constitute the keynote of character. *Cato* can live only as Roman and republican. Now, if Irony is taken as the keynote of the representation, this means that the supremely inartistic is taken as the true principle of the work of art. For the result is in part insipid figures; in part shapes void of import and of conduct,⁷ seeing that their substantive nature turns out to be a nullity; and in part, finally, those yearning moods and unresolved contradictions of the heart that attach themselves to such conceptions. Representations of this kind can awake no genuine interest. And for this reason it is from the Irony that we have eternal lamentations over the lack of profound feeling, artistic insight, and genius in the public, inasmuch as it does not understand these heights of Irony. That is to say, the public does not like all this mediocrity, half grotesque and half characterless. And it is well that these unsubstantial languishing natures afford no pleasure; it is a comfort that such insincerity and hypocrisy are not approved, and that, on the contrary, man has a desire no less for full and genuine interests than for characters which remain true to the weighty purposes of their lives.

[XCII] It may be added as an historical remark that those who more particularly adopted irony as the supreme principle of art were Solger¹ and Ludwig Tieck.²

This is not the place to speak of Solger at the length which is due to him, and I must content myself with a few observations. Solger was not like the others, satisfied with

superficial philosophical culture, but the genuine speculative need of his innermost nature impelled him to descend into the depths of the philosophic idea. And therein he hit upon the dialectical element of the Idea, the point to which I give the name of 'infinite absolute negativity', the activity of the idea in that it negates itself as the infinite and universal, so as to become finiteness and particularity, and just as really cancels this negation in turn, establishing thereby the universal and infinite in the finite and particular. Solger got no further than this negativity, and it is no doubt an element in the speculative idea, but yet when conceived as this mere dialectic unrest and dissolution both of infinite and of finite *no more than* an element; not, as Solger maintains, *the entire Idea*.³ Unhappily Solger's life was too soon interrupted for him to have achieved the concrete development of the philosophical Idea. And so he never got beyond this aspect of negativity, which has affinity with the dissolution that Irony effects of what is determinate and of what has substantive value in itself, a negativity in which he saw the principle of artistic activity. Yet in his actual life, considering the solidity, seriousness, and strength of his character, he neither was himself, in the sense above depicted, an ironical artist, nor was his profound feeling for genuine works of art, developed in protracted art studies, in this respect of an ironical nature. So much in vindication of Solger, whose life, philosophy, and art merit to be distinguished from the previously mentioned apostles of irony.

[XCIII] As regards Ludwig Tieck, his culture, too, dates from that period in which for some time Jena was the literary centre.¹ Tieck and others of these distinguished people display great

familiarity with the phrases in question, but without telling us what they mean by them. Thus, Tieck no doubt always says there ought to be Irony; but when he himself approaches the criticism of great works of art, though his recognition and portrayal of their greatness is excellent, yet, if we fancy that now is the best opportunity to explain where the Irony is, e.g. in such a work as *Romeo and Juliet*, we are taken in – for we hear no more about the Irony.²

CHAPTER V

Division Of The Subject

[[XCV](#)] I. After the above introductory remarks, it is now time to pass to the study of our object-matter. But we are still in the introduction, and an introduction cannot do more than lay down, for the sake of explanation, the general sketch of the entire course which will be followed by our subsequent scientific considerations. As, however, we have spoken of art as proceeding from the absolute Idea, and have even assigned as its end the sensuous representation of the absolute itself, we shall have to conduct this review in a way to show, at least in general, how the particular divisions of the subject spring from the conception of artistic beauty as the representation of the absolute.¹ Therefore we must attempt to awaken a very general idea of this conception itself.

[[XCV](#)] It has already been said that the content of art is the Idea,¹ and that its form lies in the plastic use of images accessible to sense. These two sides art has to reconcile into a full and united totality. The *first* attribution² which this involves is the requirement that the content, which is to be offered to artistic representation, shall show itself to be in its nature worthy of such representation. Otherwise we only

obtain a bad combination, whereby a content that will not submit to plasticity and to external presentation is forced into that form, and a matter which is in its nature prosaic is expected to find an appropriate mode of manifestation in the form antagonistic to its nature.³

[XCVI] The *second* requirement, which is derivable from this first,¹ demands of the content of art that it should not be anything abstract in itself. This does not mean that it must be concrete as the sensuous is concrete in contrast to everything spiritual and intellectual, these being taken as in themselves simple and abstract. For everything that has genuine truth in the mind as well as in nature is concrete in itself, and has, in spite of its universality, nevertheless, both subjectivity and particularity within it. If we say, e.g., of God that he is simply *One*, the supreme Being as such, we have only enunciated a lifeless abstraction of the irrational understanding. Such a God, as he himself is not apprehended in his concrete truth, can afford no material for art, least of all for plastic art. Hence the Jews and the Turks have not been able to represent their God, who does not even amount to such an abstraction of the understanding, in the positive way in which Christians have done so. For God in Christianity is conceived in His truth, and therefore, as in Himself thoroughly concrete, as a person, as a subject,² and more closely determined, as mind or spirit. What He is as spirit unfolds itself to the religious apprehension as the Trinity of Persons, which at the same time in relation with itself is *One*. Here is essentiality, universality, and particularity, together with their reconciled unity; and it is only such unity that constitutes the concrete. Now, as a content in order to possess truth at all must be of this

concrete nature, art demands the same concreteness, because a mere abstract universal has not in itself the vocation to advance to particularity and phenomenal manifestation and to unity with itself therein.³

[XCVII] If a true and therefore concrete content is to have corresponding to it a sensuous form and modelling, this sensuous form must, in the third place, be no less emphatically something individual, wholly concrete in itself, and one. The character of concreteness as belonging to both elements of art, to the content as to the representation, is precisely the point in which both may coincide and correspond to one another; as, for instance, the natural shape of the human body is such a sensuous concrete as is capable of representing spirit, which is concrete in itself, and of displaying itself in conformity therewith. Therefore we ought to abandon the idea that it is a mere matter of accident that an actual phenomenon of the external world is chosen to furnish a shape thus conformable to truth. Art does not appropriate this form either because it simply finds it existing or because there is no other. The concrete content itself involves the element of external and actual, we may say indeed of sensible manifestation. But in compensation this sensuous concrete, in which a content essentially belonging to mind expresses itself, is in its own nature addressed to the inward being; its external element of shape, whereby the content is made perceptible and imaginable, has the aim of existing purely for the heart and mind. This is the only reason for which content and artistic shape are fashioned in conformity with each other. The *mere* sensuous concrete, external nature as such, has not this purpose for its exclusive ground of origin. The birds' variegated plumage shines unseen, and their song dies away unheard, the

*Cereus*¹ which blossoms only for a night withers without having been admired in the wilds of southern forests, and these forests, jungles of the most beautiful and luxuriant vegetation, with the most odorous and aromatic perfumes, perish and decay no less unenjoyed. The work of art has not such a naive self-centred being, but is essentially a question, an address to the responsive heart, an appeal to affections and to minds.²

[XCVIII] Although the artistic bestowal of sensuous form is in this respect not accidental,¹ yet on the other hand it is not the highest mode of apprehending the spiritually concrete. Thought is a higher mode than representation by means of the sensuous concrete.² Although in a relative sense abstract, yet it must not be one-sided but concrete thinking, in order to be true and rational. Whether a given content has sensuous artistic representation for its adequate form, or in virtue of its nature essentially demands a higher and more spiritual embodiment, is a distinction that displays itself at once, if, for instance, we compare the Greek gods with God as conceived according to Christian ideas. The Greek god is not abstract but individual, and is closely akin to the natural human shape;³ the Christian God is equally a concrete personality, but in the mode of pure spiritual existence, and is to be known as *mind*⁴ and in mind.⁵ His medium of existence is therefore essentially inward knowledge and not external natural form, by means of which He can only be represented imperfectly, and not in the whole depth of His idea.⁶

[XCIX] But inasmuch as the task of art is to represent the idea to direct perception in sensuous shape, and not in the form of

thought or of pure spirituality as such, and seeing that this work of representation has its value and dignity in the correspondence and the unity of the two sides, i.e. of the Idea and its plastic embodiment, it follows that the level and excellency of art in attaining a realization adequate to its idea¹ must depend upon the grade of inwardness and unity with which Idea and Shape display themselves as fused into one.

[C] Thus the higher truth is spiritual being that has attained a shape adequate to the conception of spirit.¹ This is what furnishes the principle of division for the science of art. For before the mind can attain the true notion of its absolute essence, it has to traverse a course of stages whose ground is in this idea itself; and to this evolution of the content with which it supplies itself, there corresponds an evolution, immediately connected therewith, of the plastic forms of art, under the shape of which the mind as artist presents to itself the consciousness of itself.²

[CI] This evolution within the art-spirit¹ has again in its own nature two sides. In the *first* place the development itself is a spiritual² and universal one, in so far as the graduated series of definite *conceptions of the world* as the definite but comprehensive consciousness of nature, man and God, gives itself artistic shape; and, in the *second* place, this *universal* development of art is obliged to provide itself with external existence and sensuous form, and the definite modes of the sensuous art-existence are themselves a totality of necessary distinctions in the realm of art – which are *the several arts*. It is true, indeed, that the necessary kinds of artistic representation are on the one hand *qua* spiritual of a very

general nature, and not restricted to any one material;³ while sensuous existence contains manifold varieties of matter. But as this latter,⁴ like the mind, has the idea⁵ potentially for its inner soul, it follows from this that particular sensuous materials have a close affinity and secret accord with the spiritual distinctions and types of art presentation.

[CII] In its completeness, however, our science divides itself into three principal portions.

First, we obtain a *general part*. It has for its content and object the universal Idea¹ of artistic beauty – this beauty being conceived as the Ideal² – together with the nearer relation of the latter both to nature and to subjective artistic production.³

Secondly, there develops itself out of the idea⁴ of artistic beauty a *particular part*, in as far as the essential differences which this idea contains in itself evolve themselves into a scale of *particular plastic*⁵ forms.

In the *third* place there results a *final part*, which has for its subject the individualization of artistic beauty, that consists in the advance of art to the sensuous realization of its shapes and its self-completion as a system of the several⁶ arts and their genera and species.⁷

[CIII] 2. With respect to the first part, we must begin by recalling to mind, in order to make the sequel intelligible, that the Idea *qua* the beautiful in art is not the Idea as such, in the mode in which a metaphysical logic apprehends it as the absolute, but the Idea as developed into concrete form fit

for reality, and as having entered into immediate and adequate unity with this reality.¹ For the *Idea as such*, although it is the essentially and actually true, is yet the truth only in its generality which has not yet taken objective shape; but the *Idea as the beautiful in art* is at once the Idea when specially determined as in its essence individual reality, and also an individual shape of reality essentially destined to embody and reveal the Idea. This amounts to enunciating the requirement that the Idea, and its plastic mould as concrete reality, are to be made completely adequate to one another. When reduced to such form the Idea, as a reality moulded in conformity with the conception of the Idea, is the *Ideal*. The problem of this conformity might, to begin with, be understood in the sense that any Idea would serve, so long as the actual shape, it did not matter what shape, represented this particular Idea and no other.² But if so, the required truth of the Ideal is confounded with mere correctness, which consists in the expression of any meaning whatever in appropriate fashion so that its import may be readily recognized in the shape created. The Ideal is not to be thus understood. Any content whatever may attain to being represented quite adequately, judged by the standard of its own nature, but it does not therefore gain the right to claim the artistic beauty of the Ideal. Compared indeed with ideal beauty, even the presentation will in such a case appear defective. From this point of view we must remark to begin with, what cannot be proved till later, that the defects of a work of art are not to be regarded simply as always due, for instance, to individual unskilfulness. *Defectiveness of form* arises from *defectiveness of content*. So, for example, the Chinese, Indians, and Egyptians in their artistic shapes, their forms of deities, and their idols, never

got beyond a formless phase, or one of a vicious and false definiteness of form, and were unable to attain genuine beauty; because their mythological ideas, the content and thought of their works of art, were as yet indeterminate in themselves, or of a vicious determinateness, and did not consist in the content that is absolute in itself. The more that works of art excel in true beauty of presentation, the more profound is the inner truth of their content and thought. And in dealing with this point, we have not to think merely perhaps of the greater or lesser skill with which the natural forms as given in external reality are apprehended and imitated. For in certain stages of art-consciousness and of representation, the distortion and disfigurement of natural structures is not unintentional technical inexpertness and want of skill, but intentional alteration, which emanates from the content that is in consciousness, and is required thereby. Thus, from this point of view, there is such a thing as imperfect art, which may be quite perfect, both technically and in other respects, *in its determinate* sphere, yet reveals itself to be defective when compared with the conception of art as such, and with the Ideal. Only in the highest art are the Idea and the representation genuinely adequate to one another, in the sense that the outward shape given to the Idea is in itself essentially and actually the true shape, because the content of the Idea, which that shape expresses, is itself the true and real content. It is a corollary from this, as we indicated above,³ that the Idea must be defined in and through itself as concrete totality, and thereby possess in itself the principle and standard of its particularization and determination in external appearance. For example, the Christian imagination will be able to represent God only in human form and with man's

intellectual expression, because it is herein that God Himself is completely known in Himself as mind. Determinateness is, as it were, the bridge to phenomenal existence. Where this determinateness is not totality derived from the Idea itself, where the Idea is not conceived as self-determining and self-particularizing, the Idea remains abstract and has its determinateness, and therefore the principle that dictates its particular and exclusively appropriate mode of presentation, not in itself but external to it. Therefore, the Idea when still abstract has even its shape external, and not dictated by itself. The Idea, however, which is concrete in itself bears the principle of its mode of manifestation within itself, and is by that means the free process of giving shape to itself. Thus it is only the truly concrete Idea that can generate the true shape, and this correspondence of the two is the Ideal.⁴

[CIV] 3. Now because the Idea is in this fashion concrete unity, it follows that this unity can enter into the art-consciousness only by the expansion and reconciliation of the particularities of the Idea, and it is through this evolution that artistic beauty comes to possess a *totality of particular stages and forms*.¹ Therefore, after we have studied the beauty of art in itself and on its own merits, we must see how beauty as a whole breaks up into its particular determinations. This gives, as our *second part, the doctrine of the types of art*. These forms find their genesis in the different modes of grasping the Idea as artistic content, whereby is conditioned a difference of the form in which it manifests itself. Hence the types of art are nothing but the different relations of content and shape, relations which emanate from the Idea itself, and furnish thereby the true basis of division for this sphere. For the principle of division must

always be contained in *that* conception whose particularization and division is in question.

[CV] We have here to consider *three* relations of the Idea to its outward shaping.¹

(α) First, the Idea gives rise to the beginning of Art when, being itself still in its indistinctness and obscurity, or in vicious untrue determinateness, it is made the import of artistic creations. As indeterminate it does not yet possess in itself that individuality which the Ideal demands; its abstractness and one-sidedness leave its shape to be outwardly bizarre and defective. The first form of art is therefore rather a mere search after plastic portrayal than a capacity of genuine representation. The Idea has not yet found the true form even within itself, and therefore continues to be merely the struggle and aspiration thereafter. In general terms we may call this form the *Symbolic* form of art. In it the abstract Idea has its outward shape external to itself² in natural sensuous matter, with which the process of shaping begins, and from which, *qua* outward expression, it is inseparable.

Natural objects are thus primarily left unaltered, and yet at the same time invested with the substantial Idea as their significance, so that they receive the vocation of expressing it, and claim to be interpreted as though the Idea itself were present in them. At the root of this is the fact that natural objects have in them an aspect in which they are capable of representing a universal meaning. But as an adequate correspondence is not yet possible, this reference can only concern *an abstract attribute*, as when a lion is used to mean strength.

On the other hand, this abstractness of the relation brings to consciousness no less strongly the foreignness of the Idea to natural phenomena; and the Idea, having no other reality to express it, expatiates in all these shapes, seeks itself in them in all their unrest and disproportion, but nevertheless does not find them adequate to itself. Then it proceeds to exaggerate the natural shapes and the phenomena of reality into indefiniteness and disproportion, to intoxicate itself in them, to seethe and ferment in them, to do violence to them, to distort and explode them into unnatural shapes, and strives by the variety, hugeness, and splendour of the forms employed³ to exalt the phenomenon to the level of the Idea. For the Idea is here still more or less indeterminate and non-plastic, but the natural objects are in their shape thoroughly determinate.

Hence, in view of the unsuitability of the two elements to each other, the relation of the Idea to objective reality becomes a *negative* one, for the former, as in its nature inward, is unsatisfied with such an externality, and as being its inner universal substance⁴ persists in exaltation or *Sublimity* beyond and above all this inadequate abundance of shapes. In virtue of this sublimity the natural phenomena and the human shapes and incidents are accepted, and left as they were, though at the same time understood to be inadequate to their significance, which is exalted far above every earthly content.

These aspects may be pronounced in general terms to constitute the character of the primitive artistic pantheism of the East, which either charges even the meanest objects with the absolute import, or again coerces nature with violence into the expression of its view. By this means it becomes

bizarre, grotesque, and tasteless, or turns the infinite but abstract freedom of the substantive Idea disdainfully against all phenomenal being as null and evanescent. By such means the import cannot be completely embodied in the expression, and in spite of all aspiration and endeavour the reciprocal inadequacy of shape and Idea remains insuperable. This may be taken as the first form of art – Symbolic art with its aspiration, its disquiet,⁵ its mystery and its sublimity.

[CVI] (β) In the second form of art, which we propose to call *Classical*, the double defect of symbolic art is cancelled. The plastic shape of symbolic art is imperfect, because, in the first place, the Idea in it only enters into consciousness in *abstract* determinateness or indeterminateness, and, in the second place, this must always make the conformity of shape to import defective, and in its turn merely abstract. The classical form of art is the solution of this double difficulty; it is the free and adequate embodiment of the Idea in the shape that, according to its conception, is peculiarly appropriate to the Idea itself.¹ With it, therefore, the Idea is capable of entering into free and complete accord. Hence, the classical type of art is the first to afford the production and intuition of the completed Ideal, and to establish it as a realized fact.

The conformity, however, of notion and reality in classical art must not be taken in the purely *formal* sense of the agreement of a content with the external shape given to it, any more than this could be the case with the Ideal itself. Otherwise every copy from nature, and every type of countenance, every landscape, flower, or scene, etc., which forms the purport of any representation, would be at once made classical by the agreement which it displays between

form and content. On the contrary, in classical art the peculiarity of the content consists in being itself concrete idea, and, as such, the concrete spiritual; for only the spiritual is the truly inner self.² To suit such a content, then, we must search out that in Nature which on its own merits belongs to the essence and actuality of the mind. It must be the absolute notion that *invented* the shape appropriate to concrete mind, so that the *subjective* notion – in this case the spirit of art – has merely *found* it, and brought it, as an existence possessing natural shape, into accord with free individual spirituality.³ This shape, with which the Idea as spiritual – as individually determinate spirituality – invests itself when manifested as a temporal phenomenon, is *the human form*. Personification and anthropomorphism have often been decried as a degradation of the spiritual; but art, in as far as its end is to bring before perception the spiritual in sensuous form, must advance to such anthropomorphism, as it is only in its proper body that mind is adequately revealed to sense. The migration of souls is in this respect a false abstraction,⁴ and physiology ought to have made it one of its axioms that life had necessarily in its evolution to attain to the human shape, as the sole sensuous phenomenon that is appropriate to mind. The human form is employed in the classical type of art not as mere sensuous existence, but exclusively as the existence and physical form corresponding to mind, and is therefore exempt from all the deficiencies of what is merely sensuous, and from the contingent finiteness of phenomenal existence. The outer shape must be thus purified in order to express in itself a content adequate to itself; and again, if the conformity of import and content is to be complete, the spiritual meaning which is the content must be of a particular kind. It must, that is to say, be

qualified to express itself completely in the physical form of man, without projecting into another world beyond the scope of such an expression in sensuous and bodily terms. This condition has the effect that Mind is by it at once specified as a particular case of mind, as human mind, and not as simply absolute and eternal, inasmuch as mind in this latter sense is incapable of proclaiming and expressing itself otherwise than as intellectual being.⁵

Out of this latter point arises, in its turn, the defect which brings about the dissolution of classical art, and demands a transition into a third and higher form, viz. into the *Romantic* form of art.

[CVII] (γ) The romantic form of art destroys the completed union of the Idea and its reality, and recurs, though in a higher phase, to that difference and antagonism of two aspects which was left unvanquished by symbolic art.¹ The classical type attained the highest excellence, of which the sensuous embodiment of art is capable; and if it is in any way defective, the defect is in art as a whole, i.e. in the limitation of its sphere. This limitation consists in the fact that art as such takes for its object Mind – the conception of which is *infinite* concrete universality – in the shape of *sensuous* concreteness, and in the classical phase sets up the perfect amalgamation of spiritual and sensuous existence as a Conformity of the two. Now, as a matter of fact, in such an amalgamation Mind cannot be represented according to its true notion. For mind is the infinite subjectivity of the Idea, which, as absolute inwardness,² is not capable of finding free expansion in its true nature on condition of remaining transposed into a bodily medium as the existence appropriate to it.

As an escape from such a condition the romantic form of art in its turn dissolves the inseparable unity of the classical phase, because it has won a significance which goes beyond the classical form of art and its mode of expression.³ This significance – if we may recall familiar ideas – coincides with what Christianity declares to be true of God as Spirit, in contradistinction to the Greek faith in gods which forms the essential and appropriate content for classical art. In Greek art the concrete import is potentially, but not explicitly, the unity of the human and divine nature; a unity which, just because it is purely *immediate*⁴ and *not explicit*, is capable of adequate manifestation in an immediate and sensuous mode. The Greek god is the object of naïve intuition and sensuous imagination. His shape is, therefore, the bodily shape of man. The circle of his power and of his being is individual and individually limited. In relation with the subject,⁵ he is, therefore, an essence and a power with which the subject's inner being is merely in latent unity, not itself possessing this unity as inward subjective knowledge. Now the higher stage is the *knowledge* of this *latent* unity, which as latent is the import of the classical form of art, and capable of perfect representation in bodily shape. The elevation of the latent or potential into self-conscious knowledge produces an enormous difference. It is the infinite difference which, e.g., separates man as such from the animals. Man is animal, but even in his animal functions he is not confined within the latent and potential as the animal is, but becomes conscious of them, learns to know them, and raises them – as, for instance, the process of digestion – into self-conscious science. By this means Man breaks the boundary of merely potential and immediate consciousness, so that just for the reason that he knows himself to be animal, he ceases to be

animal, and, as *mind*, attains to self-knowledge.⁶

If in the above fashion the unity of the human and divine nature, which in the former phase was potential, is raised from an *immediate* to a *conscious* unity, it follows that the true medium for the reality of this content is no longer the sensuous immediate existence of the spiritual, the human bodily shape, but *self-conscious inward intelligence*.⁷ Now, Christianity brings God before our intelligence as *spirit*, or mind – not as particularized individual spirit, but as absolute, in *spirit* and in truth. And for this reason Christianity retires from the sensuousness of imagination into intellectual inwardness, and makes this, not bodily shape, the medium and actual existence of its significance. So, too, the unity of the human and divine nature is a conscious unity, only to be realized by *spiritual* knowledge and in *spirit*. Thus the new content, won by this unity, is not inseparable from sensuous representation, as if that were adequate to it, but is freed from this immediate existence, which has to be posited⁸ as negative, absorbed, and reflected into the spiritual unity. In this way romantic art must be considered as art transcending itself, while remaining within the artistic sphere and in artistic form.

Therefore, in short, we may abide by the statement that in this third stage the object (of art) is *free*, concrete intellectual being, which has the function of revealing itself as spiritual existence for the inward⁹ world of spirit. In conformity with such an object-matter, art cannot work for sensuous perception. It must address itself to the inward mind, which coalesces with its object simply and as though this were itself,¹⁰ to the subjective inwardness, to the heart, the feeling, which, being spiritual, aspires to freedom within

itself, and seeks and finds its reconciliation only in the spirit within. It is this *inner* world that forms the content of the romantic, and must therefore find its representation as such inward feeling, and in the show or presentation of such feeling. The world of inwardness celebrates its triumph over the outer world, and actually in the sphere of the outer and in its medium manifests this its victory, owing to which the sensuous appearance sinks into worthlessness.

But, on the other hand, this type of Art,¹¹ like every other, needs an external vehicle of expression. Now the spiritual has withdrawn into itself out of the external and its immediate oneness therewith. For this reason, the sensuous externality of concrete form is accepted and represented, as in symbolic art, as something transient and fugitive. And the same measure is dealt to the subjective finite mind and will, even including the peculiarity or caprice of the individual, of character, action, etc., or of incident and plot. The aspect of external existence is committed to contingency, and left at the mercy of freaks of imagination, whose caprice is no more likely to mirror what is given as it is given, than to throw the shapes of the outer world into chance medley, or distort them into grotesqueness. For this external element no longer has its notion and significance, as in classical art, in its own sphere, and in its own medium. It has come to find them in the feelings, the display of which is *in themselves* instead of being in the external and *its* form of reality, and which have the power to preserve or to regain their state of reconciliation with themselves, in every accident, in every unessential circumstance that takes independent shape, in all misfortunes and grief, and even in crime.

Owing to this, the characteristics of symbolic art, in difference, discrepancy, and severance of Idea and plastic

shape, are here reproduced, but with an essential difference. In the sphere of the romantic, the Idea, whose defectiveness in the case of the symbol produced the defect of external shape, has to reveal itself in the medium of spirit and feelings as perfected in itself. And it is because of this higher perfection that it withdraws itself from any adequate union with the external element, inasmuch as it can seek and achieve its true reality and revelation nowhere but in itself.

This we may take as in the abstract the character of the symbolic, classical, and romantic forms of art, which represent the three relations of the Idea to its embodiment in the sphere of art. They consist in the aspiration after, and the attainment and transcendence of, the Ideal as the true Idea of beauty.

[CVIII] 4. The third part of our subject, in contradistinction to the two just described, presupposes the conception of the Ideal, and the general types of art, inasmuch as it simply consists of their realization in particular sensuous media. Hence we have no longer to do with the inner development of artistic beauty in conformity with its general fundamental principles. What we have to study is how these principles pass into actual existence, how they distinguish themselves in their external aspect, and how they give actuality to every element contained in the idea of beauty, separately and by itself *as a work of art*, and not merely as a general type.¹ Now, what art transfers into external existence are the differences² proper to the idea of beauty and immanent therein. Therefore, the general types of art must reveal themselves in this third part, as before, in the character of the fundamental principle that determines the arrangement and definition of the *several arts*; in other words, the species

of art contain in themselves the same essential modifications as those with which we become acquainted as the general types of art. External objectivity, however, to which these forms are introduced through the medium of a sensuous and therefore *particular* material, affects these types in the way of making them *separate* into independent and so particular forms embodying their realization. For each type finds its definite character in some one definite external material, and its adequate actuality in the mode of portrayal which that prescribes. But, moreover, these types of art, being for all their determinateness its *universal* forms, break the bounds of *particular* realization by a determinate form of art, and achieve existence in other arts as well, although in subordinate fashion. Therefore, the particular arts belong each of them specifically to *one* of the general types of art, and constitute *its adequate* external actuality; and also they represent, each of them after its own mode of external plasticity, the totality of the types of art.³

Then, speaking generally, we are dealing in this third principal division with the beautiful of art, as it unfolds itself in the several arts and in their creations into a *world* of actualized beauty. The content of this world is the beautiful, and the true beautiful, as we saw, is spiritual being in concrete shape, the Ideal; or, more closely looked at, the absolute mind, and the truth itself. This region, that of divine truth artistically represented to perception and to feeling, forms the centre of the whole world of art. It is the independent, free, and divine plasticity, which has thoroughly mastered the external elements of form and of medium, and wears them simply as a means to manifestation of itself. Still, as the beautiful unfolds itself in this region in the character of *objective* reality, and in so

doing distinguishes within itself its individual aspects and elements, permitting them independent particularity, it follows that this centre erects its extremes, realized in their peculiar actuality, into its own antitheses. Thus one of these extremes comes to consist in an objectivity as yet devoid of mind, in the merely natural vesture of God. At this point the external element takes plastic shape as something that has its spiritual aim and content, not in itself, but in another.⁴

The other extreme is the divine as inward, as something known, as the variously particularized *subjective* existence of the Deity; it is the truth as operative and vital in sense, heart, and mind of individual subjects, not persisting in the mould of its external shapes, but as having returned into subjective, individual inwardness. In such a mode, the Divine is at the same time distinguished from its first manifestation as Deity, and passes thereby into the diversity of particulars which belongs to all subjective knowledge – emotion, perception, and feeling. In the analogous province of religion, with which art at its highest stage is immediately connected, we conceive this same difference as follows. *First*, we think of the earthly natural life in its finiteness as standing on one side; but, then, *secondly* consciousness makes God its object, in which the distinction of objectivity and subjectivity is done away. And at last, *thirdly*, we advance from God as such to the devotion of the community, that is, to God as living and present in the subjective consciousness. Just so these three chief modifications present themselves in the world of art in independent development.⁵

[CIX] (α) The *first* of the particular arts with which, according to their fundamental principle, we have to begin, is architecture considered as a fine art. Its task lies in so

manipulating external inorganic nature that it becomes cognate to mind,¹ as an artistic outer world. The material of architecture is matter itself in its immediate externality as a heavy mass subject to mechanical laws, and its forms do not depart from the forms of inorganic nature, but are merely set in order in conformity with relations of the abstract understanding, i.e. with relations of symmetry. In this material and in such forms, the ideal as concrete spirituality does not admit of being realized. Hence the reality which is represented in them remains contrasted with the Idea, as something external which it has not penetrated, or has penetrated only to establish an abstract relation. For these reasons, the fundamental type of the fine art of building is the *symbolical* form of art. It is architecture that pioneers the way for the adequate realization of the God, and in this its service bestows hard toil upon existing nature, in order to disentangle it from the jungle of finitude and the abortiveness of chance. By this means it levels a space for the God, gives form to his external surroundings, and builds him his temple as a fit place for concentration of spirit, and for its direction to the mind's absolute objects. It raises an enclosure round the assembly of those gathered together, as a defence against the threatening of the storm, against rain, the hurricane, and wild beasts, and reveals the will to assemble, although externally, yet in conformity with principles of art. With such import² as this it has power to inspire its material and its forms more or less effectively, as the determinate character of the content on behalf of which it sets to work is more or less significant, more concrete or more abstract, more profound in sounding its own depths, or more dim and more superficial. So much, indeed, may architecture attempt in this respect as even to create an

adequate artistic existence for such an import in its shapes and in its material. But in such a case it has already overstepped its own boundary, and is leaning to sculpture, the phase above it. For the limit of architecture lies precisely in this point, that it retains the spiritual as an inward existence over against the external forms of the art, and consequently must refer to what has soul only as to something other than its own creations.³

[CX] (β) Architecture, however, as we have seen, has purified the external world, and endowed it with symmetrical order and with affinity to mind; and the temple of the God, the house of his community, stands ready. Into this temple, then, in the *second* place, the God enters in the lightning-flash of individuality, which strikes and permeates the inert mass, while the infinite¹ and no longer merely symmetrical form belonging to mind itself concentrates and gives shape to the corresponding bodily existence. This is the task of *Sculpture*. In as far as in this art the spiritual inward being which architecture can but indicate makes itself at home in the sensuous shape and its external matter, and in as far as these two sides are so adapted to one another that neither is predominant, sculpture must be assigned the *classical* form of art as its fundamental type. For this reason the sensuous element itself has here no expression which could not be that of the spiritual element, just as, conversely, sculpture can represent no spiritual content which does not admit throughout of being adequately presented to perception in bodily form.² Sculpture should place the spirit before us in its bodily form and in immediate unity therewith at rest and in peace; and the form should be animated by the content of spiritual individuality. And so the external sensuous matter

is here no longer manipulated, either in conformity with its mechanical quality alone, as a mass possessing weight, nor in shapes belonging to the inorganic world, nor as indifferent to colour,³ etc.; but it is wrought in ideal forms of the human figure, and, it must be remarked, in all three spatial dimensions.

In this last respect we must claim for sculpture that it is in it that the inward and spiritual are first revealed in their eternal repose and essential self-completeness. To such repose and unity with itself there can correspond only that external shape which itself maintains its unity and repose. And this is fulfilled by shape in its abstract spatiality.⁴ The spirit which sculpture represents is that which is solid in itself, not broken up in the play of trivialities and of passions; and hence its external form too is not abandoned to any manifold phases of appearance, but appears under this one aspect only, as the abstraction of space in the whole of its dimensions.

[CXI] (γ) NOW, after architecture has erected the temple, and the hand of sculpture has supplied it with the statue of the God, then, in the third place, this god present to sense is confronted in the spacious halls of his house by the *community*.¹ The community is the spiritual reflection into itself of such sensuous existence, and is the animating subjectivity and inner life which brings about the result that the determining principle for the content of art, as well as for the medium which represents it in outward form, comes to be particularization [dispersion into various shapes, attributes, incidents, etc.], individualization, and the subjectivity which they require.² The solid unity which the God has in sculpture breaks up into the multitudinous inner

lives of individuals, whose unity is not sensuous, but purely ideal.³

It is only in this stage that God Himself comes to be really and truly spirit – the spirit in His (God's) community; for He here begins to be a to-and-fro, an alternation between His unity within himself and his realization in the individual's knowledge and in its separate being, as also in the common nature and union of the multitude. In the community, God is released from the abstractness of unexpanded self-identity, as well as from the simple absorption in a bodily medium, by which sculpture represents Him. And He is thus exalted into spiritual existence and into knowledge, into the reflected⁴ appearance which essentially displays itself as inward and as subjectivity. Therefore the higher content is now the spiritual nature, and that in its absolute shape. But the dispersion of which we have spoken reveals this at the same time as particular spiritual being, and as individual character. Now, what manifests itself in this phase as the main thing is not the serene quiescence of the God in Himself, but appearance as such, being which is *for* another, self-manifestation. And hence, in the phase we have reached, all the most manifold subjectivity in its living movement and operation – as human passion, action, and incident, and, in general, the wide realm of human feeling, will, and its negation – is for its own sake the object of artistic representation. In conformity with this content, the sensuous element of art has at once to show itself as made particular in itself and as adapted to subjective inwardness. Media that fulfil this requirement we have in colour, in musical sound, and finally in sound as the mere indication of inward perceptions and ideas; and as modes of realizing the import in question by help of these media we obtain painting,

music, and poetry. In this region the sensuous medium displays itself as subdivided in its own being and universally set down as ideal.⁵ Thus it has the highest degree of conformity with the content of art, which, as such, is spiritual, and the connection of intelligible import and sensuous medium develops into closer intimacy than was possible in the case of architecture and sculpture.⁶ The unity attained, however, is a more inward unity, the weight of which is thrown wholly on the subjective side, and which, in as far as form and content are compelled to particularize themselves and give themselves merely ideal existence, can only come to pass at the expense of the objective universality of the content and also of its amalgamation with the immediately sensuous element.⁷

The arts, then, of which form and content exalt themselves to ideality, abandon the character of symbolic architecture and the classical ideal of sculpture, and therefore borrow their type from the romantic form of art, whose mode of plasticity they are most adequately adapted to express. And they constitute a *totality* of arts, because the romantic type is the most concrete in itself.⁸

[CXII] *i.* The articulation of this *third sphere* of the individual arts may be determined as follows. The *first* art in it, which comes next to sculpture, is painting. It employs as a medium for its content and for the plastic embodiment of that content visibility as such in as far as it is specialized in its own nature, i.e. as developed into colour. It is true that the material employed in architecture and sculpture is also visible and coloured; but it is not, as in painting, visibility as such, not the simple light which, differentiating itself in virtue of its contrast with darkness, and in combination with

the latter, gives rise to colour.¹ This quality of visibility, made subjective in itself and treated as ideal, needs neither, like architecture, the abstractly mechanical attribute of mass as operative in the properties of heavy matter, nor, like sculpture, the complete sensuous attributes of space, even though concentrated into organic shapes. The visibility and the rendering visible which belong to painting have their differences in a more ideal form, in the several kinds of colour, and they liberate art from the sensuous completeness in space which attaches to material things, by restricting themselves to a plane surface.

On the other hand, the content also attains the most comprehensive specification. Whatever can find room in the human heart, as feeling, idea, and purpose; whatever it is capable of shaping into act – all this diversity of material is capable of entering into the varied content of painting. The whole realm of particular existence, from the highest embodiment of mind down to the most isolated object of nature, finds a place here. For it is possible even for finite nature,² in its particular scenes and phenomena, to make its appearance in the realm of art, if only some allusion to an element of mind endows it with affinity to thought and feeling.

[CXIII] *ii.* The *second* art in which the romantic type realizes itself is contrasted with painting, and is music.¹ Its medium, though still sensuous, yet develops into still more thorough subjectivity and particularization. Music, too, treats the sensuous as ideal, and does so by negating² and idealizing into the individual isolation of a single point, the indifferent externality³ of space, whose complete semblance is accepted and imitated by painting. The single point, *qua* such a

negativity⁴ (excluding space) is in itself a concrete and active process of positive negation⁵ within the attributes of matter, in the shape of a motion and tremor of the material body within itself and in its relation to itself. Such an inchoate ideality of matter,⁶ which appears no longer as under the form of space, but as temporal ideality,⁷ is sound, the sensuous set down as negated, with its abstract visibility converted into audibility, inasmuch as sound, so to speak, liberates the ideal content from its immersion in matter. This earliest inwardness of matter and inspiration of soul into it furnishes the medium for the mental inwardness – itself as yet indefinite – and for the soul⁸ into which mind concentrates itself; and finds utterance in its tones for the heart with its whole gamut of feelings and passions. Thus music forms the centre of the romantic arts, just as sculpture represents the central point between architecture and the arts of romantic subjectivity. Thus, too, it forms the point of transition between abstract spatial sensuousness, such as painting employs, and the abstract spirituality of poetry. Music has within itself, like architecture, a relation of quantity conformable to the understanding, as the antithesis to emotion and inwardness; and has also as its basis a solid conformity to law on the part of the tones, of their conjunction, and of their succession.⁹

[CXIV] **iii.** As regards the *third* and most spiritual mode of representation of the romantic art-type, we must look for it in *poetry*. Its characteristic peculiarity lies in the power with which it subjects to the mind and to its ideas the sensuous element from which music and painting in their degree began to liberate art. For sound, the only external matter which poetry retains, is in it no longer the feeling of the

sonorous itself, but is a *sign*, which by itself is void of import.¹ And it is a sign of the idea² which has become concrete in itself, and not merely of indefinite feeling and of its nuances and grades. This is how sound develops into the *Word*, as voice articulate in itself, whose import it is to indicate ideas and notions. The merely negative point up to which music had developed now makes its appearance as the completely concrete point, the point which is mind, the self-conscious individual, which, producing out of itself the infinite space of its ideas, unites it with the temporal character of sound.³ Yet this sensuous element, which in music was still immediately one with inward feeling, is in poetry separated from the content of consciousness. In poetry the mind determines this content for its own sake, and apart from all else, into the shape of ideas, and though it employs sound to express them, yet treats it solely as a symbol⁴ without value or import. Thus considered, sound may just as well be reduced to a mere letter, for the audible, like the visible, is thus depressed into a mere indication of mind.⁵ For this reason the proper medium of poetical representation is the poetical imagination⁶ and intellectual portrayal itself. And as this element is common to all types of art, it follows that poetry runs through them all and develops itself independently in each. Poetry is the universal art of the mind which has become free in its own nature, and which is not tied to find its realization in external sensuous matter, but expatiates exclusively in the inner space and inner time of the ideas and feelings.⁷ Yet just in this its highest phase art ends by transcending itself, inasmuch as it abandons the medium of a harmonious embodiment of mind in sensuous form, and passes from the poetry of

imagination⁸ into the prose of thought.

[CXV] 5. Such we may take to be the articulated totality of the particular arts, viz. the external art of architecture, the objective art of sculpture, and the subjective art of painting, music and poetry. Many other classifications have been attempted, for a work of art presents so many aspects, that, as has often been the case, first one and then another is made the basis of classification. For instance, one might take the sensuous medium. Thus architecture is treated as crystallization;¹ sculpture, as the organic modelling of the material in its sensuous and spatial totality; painting, as the coloured surface and line; while in music, space, as such, passes into the point of time possessed of content within itself, until finally the external medium is in poetry depressed into complete insignificance. Or, again, these differences have been considered with reference to their purely abstract attributes of space and time.² Such abstract peculiarities of works of art may, like their material medium, be consistently explored in their characteristic traits; but they cannot be worked out as the ultimate and fundamental law, because any such aspect itself derives its origin from a higher principle, and must therefore be subordinate thereto.

This higher principle we have found in the types of art – symbolic, classical, and romantic – which are the universal stages or elements³ of the Idea of beauty itself. For *symbolic* art attains its most adequate reality and most complete application in *architecture*, in which it holds sway in the full import of its notion, and is not yet degraded to be, as it were, the inorganic nature dealt with by another art. The *classical* type of art, on the other hand, finds adequate

realization in sculpture, while it treats architecture only as furnishing an enclosure in which it is to operate,⁴ and has not acquired the power of developing painting and music as absolute⁵ forms for its content. The *romantic* type of art, finally, takes possession of painting and music, and in like manner of poetic representation, as substantive and unconditionally adequate modes of utterance. Poetry, however, is conformable to all types of the beautiful, and extends over them all, because the artistic imagination⁶ is its proper medium, and imagination is essential to every product that belongs to the beautiful, whatever its type may be.

And, therefore, what the particular arts realize in individual works of art are according to their abstract conception simply the universal types which constitute the self-unfolding Idea of beauty. It is as the external realization of this Idea that the wide Pandieon of art is being erected, whose architect and builder is the spirit of beauty as it awakens to self-knowledge, and to complete which the history of the world will need its evolution of ages.⁷

Commentary

I. 1. The Latinate *aesthetica* (later translated into German as *ästhetik*) was first used by A. G. Baumgarten (1714–62), in his *Metaphysica* (1739) and *Aesthetica* (1750). It derives from the Greek *aisthanesthai*, ‘to perceive’, *aisthēsis*, ‘perception’, and *aisthētikos*, ‘capable of perception’. Thus it is originally, as Baumgarten defines it, the ‘science of sensory knowledge’, but it was soon restricted to the ‘science of sensory beauty’. The term covers the beauty of nature, as well as of art. Baumgarten was a follower of Christian Wolff (1679–1754), the mathematician and rationalist philosopher whose thought dominated German philosophy before the rise of Kantianism.

2. From the Greek *kalos*, ‘beautiful, fine, etc.’, the superlative *kallistos*, ‘most, supremely beautiful, etc.’, and *hallos*, ‘beauty’. Thus ‘kallistic’, the ‘science of beauty’, is not especially associated with feeling and perception, but, like ‘aesthetic’, it covers nature as well as art.

3. *Wissenschaft*: this is used more widely than our ‘science’ the systematic study of e.g. history or art is a *Wissenschaft*.

4. *schöne Kunst*: this covers architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and poetry or literature (and sometimes dance – but not for Hegel), in contrast to crafts and to the seven ‘liberal arts’ of the Middle Ages.

II. 1. *aus dem Geiste geborene und wieder geborene*: lit. ‘born and born again from the spirit’. The word *Geist* covers most of the senses of both ‘mind’ and ‘spirit’, and Bosanquet uses both these words to translate it. Bosanquet here detects an allusion to ‘born of water and of the Spirit’ (John 3:5), referring to spiritual rebirth. Natural objects, materials, etc. are transformed by spirit, i.e., in this context the human mind, and are reborn as works of art. Cf. section XLVI: ‘it... has received the baptism of the spiritual’.

2. That mind and its products are higher than nature does not strictly entail that the *beauty* of the mind’s products is higher than the beauty of nature, any more than it entails that e.g. redness in paintings is ‘higher’ or more intense than the redness of roses. But beauty is not, for Hegel, only a surface (‘skin-deep’) quality, but includes whatever makes something worthy of aesthetic contemplation, and thus varies in proportion to the ‘height’ of the beautiful object. Cf. section LII, n. I.

3. ‘Not in the sense of fancying what you please, but in the technical sense of having separate existence; detached, so to speak, from the general background of things, not a mere concurrence of other elements’ [B]. But many natural objects, esp. animals, have a relatively separate existence, and if the sun or sunset is considered aesthetically it is considered as detached from the general background. It is more likely that ‘freedom’ here means ‘freedom from the constraint of rules or laws’. See section VII, n. 2.

4. ‘Has no power of distinguishing itself from other things’ [B]. But natural objects, esp. animals, are able to distinguish themselves, and ‘indifferent’ should contrast with ‘free’ and ‘self-conscious’, meaning something like ‘unaware of, and

unconcerned about, its own nature, and fate'. Hegel seems here to be comparing the sun with the mind, rather than with the products of mind. (Cf. section [III](#), n. 3.)

5. *Formally* a fancy or a doodle is higher than the sun, since it is a free product of mind. In *content*, the sun is higher than the fancy or doodle, since it is 'necessary'. But to see the sun as necessary is to see it in its 'necessary connection with other things', e.g. as the centre of the solar system, the sustainer of life, etc., and this way of seeing it excludes viewing it as beautiful. To the objection that a *view* of a sunset is as much a mental product as a doodle or a fancy, Hegel would reply that the view is properly brought to birth (or to spiritual rebirth) only in a painting (or a poem) and that it then has the higher beauty of art.

[III.](#) **1.** *Vorstellung*: lit. '(re)presentation', but also 'idea(tion), conception, imagination, etc' See section [CXIV](#), n. 6.

2. 'Capable of truth' translates *das Wahrhaftige*, lit. 'the true, genuine'. Here it combines two ideas: (i) the mind discerns the truth about other things, e.g. discovers the laws governing the solar system and focuses on and assesses the beauty of sunsets, etc.; and (ii) the mind is independent and self-contained, having such qualities as beauty underivatively.

3. Hegel's argument as it stands leaves two problems: (i) It fails to differentiate between beauty and other properties. That the mind alone is true would imply that not only the beauty of things, but e.g. their redness and solidity, are derivative from the corresponding qualities of mind. But Hegel believes that beauty is mind-derived in a way that these other properties are not. (ii) It fails to distinguish

between natural objects and works of art. Granted that only the mind is truly and underderivatively beautiful, works of art are not themselves mind(s), but ‘partake’ of mind and are ‘created’ by it. Thus the argument does not entail that the beauty of paintings is of a higher order than the beauty of sunsets. What is needed is a clearer distinction between the respective relations, to the mind, of natural objects and of works of art.

v. 1. The relation between natural and artistic beauty is discussed in part I, ch. 11 of the *Aesthetics* (Knox, *LA*, 1, pp. 116–52). (Since this discussion ‘falls within’ aesthetics, it strictly follows that aesthetics is *not* concerned with art alone.)

vi. 1. On the purpose or end of art, as e.g. a ‘mediator between reason and sensuousness’, etc., see [Chapter III](#), Part II, esp. sections [LXXI](#)–[LXXV](#).

2. *Täuschung*.

3. *Schein* (from the verb *scheinen*, ‘to show, shine, gleam, appear, etc.’) has a range of senses: ‘shine, show, gleam, appearance, semblance’. Hegel exploits its similarity to *schön*, ‘beautiful’. Here the stress is on the sense of ‘semblance’ and *Schein* is assimilated to *Täuschung*, ‘deception’. In his reply to this objection in section [XIV](#), Hegel differentiates them.

vii 1. In this section, Hegel uses *Einbildung* (*skraft*), the ‘(power of) imagination’, and *Phantasie*, ‘fancy, imagination’, interchangeably. Elsewhere, e.g. *Philosophy of Mind*, §§455–7, and in section [LIX](#) below, he distinguishes them: the *Einbildungskraft* is imitative and mechanical (‘reproductive’),

the *Phantasie* is free and creative ('productive').

2. Here 'freedom' is lack of constraint by rules or laws. Cf. section II, n. 3.

3. *Idee*: here, but not invariably, it is close to *Begriff*, 'concept(ion)', notion', and is associated with conceptual thought, in contrast to the 'reality' of art.

VIII. 1. 'Idea' and 'notion' in this section translate *Begriff*, which here indicates conceptual thought.

2. *Gesetzmässigkeit*: lit. 'conformity to law'.

IX. 1. e.g., Charles Batteux (1713-80). Cf. section XXVIII, n. 2.

2. *Raisonnement*: invariably a disparaging term in Hegel, amounting to 'sophistical reasoning, unmethodical argumentation'.

3. *Partikuläres*: 'different unconnected matters, considered as merely thrown together in an aggregate, or occurring in a series; opposed to parts or cases united by an essential principle' [B].

4. The structure of this piece of *Räsonnement* seems to be as follows: The 'facts' are that (i) the forms of beauty are manifold, and (ii) the phenomenon of beauty is omnipresent. Fact (ii) implies that there is a 'universal impulse of beauty'. Fact (i) – or the equivalent claim that 'ideas [*Vorstellungen*] of beauty are... various, etc' – implies that there are no universal laws of beauty and taste. But the claims that there is a universal impulse of beauty and that there are no laws of beauty are also connected, in that if there were universal laws of beauty, the omnipresence of beautiful objects could be explained by men's tendency to

follow these laws rather than by an impulse. Cf. sections [XXVII](#) and [XLII](#) on rules, and [XXXIV](#) and [XLIII](#) on genius.

[X.](#) 1.i.e. independent, not serving some other purpose.

[XII.](#) 1. 'the Divine Nature' translates *das Göttliche*, lit. 'the divine', from *götlich*, 'divine'.

2. *Geist*: lit. 'spirit', with a wider sense than 'mind'.

3. That art has this significance, while natural beauty does not, is Hegel's main reason for excluding natural beauty from aesthetics. In section [LXXIV](#), he attempts to explain why to see art in this way is not to subordinate it to an aim or purpose.

[XIII.](#) 1. Religion and philosophy also represent the 'highest ideas' [*das Höchste*], but they do not, like art, do so 'in sensuous forms'.

2. Hegel's words suggest that the first step in the historical process is that non-sensory thought (*Gedanke*) – religion or philosophy – creates or discovers the 'supra-sensuous world' or 'the beyond', and that art heals 'this schism' only subsequently. But he does not mean that the discovery of the supra-sensuous world *preceded* the existence of art. In relatively recent times, thought has opened up such a schism independently of art, and art, in Hegel's view, helps to close it again: see sections [LXXI](#)–[LXXV](#). But over human history as a whole, sensory artistic thought precedes 'thought in cognition'. Thus it is art itself, rather than pure, non-sensory thought, that, at least in the early stages of history, both opens up the schism and subsequently heals it: see sections [CIV](#)–[CVI](#).

XIV. 1. *Schein* and *scheinen* are here distinguished from 'semblance', 'illusion' and 'appear(anee)' (in contrast with 'reality'), and associated with the sense of 'being or becoming manifest, plain to see'. Truth (or the 'essence') must appear: e.g. magnetism must manifest itself in such phenomena as the attraction of iron filings; the meaning of a novel must appear in descriptions of concrete incidents, and these in turn in printed sentences. In these cases the appearance does not distort or conceal the truth, but completes it.

2. 'The life in which we treat common circumstances and sensations as, in their degree, realities' [B].

3. To regard art (e.g. a painting of a chair) as a semblance or deception is to assume, wrongly, the reality of the external objects, sensations, etc. with which art, or the objects presented in art, are contrasted. Hegel means not that external objects do not exist or are merely projections of our sensations (which are also not 'real', in his view), but that they are ontologically and evaluatively low-grade. E.g. non-fictional detectives are not 'real' detectives, since their investigative skills are imperfect. Sherlock Holmes, by contrast, is a real detective, manifesting the essential traits of an investigator in an undiluted form.

4. i.e. 'that which is actual in its own right'. Later in the *Aesthetics*(Knox, LA,1, pp. 22off.) Hegel describes the 'universal powers of action', i.e. the 'great motifs of art, the eternal religious and ethical relationships, family, fatherland, state, church, glory, friendship, status, dignity, and, especially in the romantic world, honour and love', which 'contain the genuine content of the divine and human, and thus remain the driving-force in action, and are what

ultimately ceaselessly realizes itself. These powers, and the conflicts that they often involve, are obscured by the details of everyday life, but are presented in a purer form in e.g. Sophocles' *Antigone*, where Antigone represents familial piety, and Creon represents the welfare of the state. These powers have, in Hegel's view, a 'higher reality' than phenomenal entities, and confer on individuals who represent them, such as Creon and Antigone, a higher reality than that of most non-fictional people.

xv. **1.** A content (*Inhalt*) can appear in different forms, in philosophical thought (e.g. Plato's *Republic*), as well as in art (e.g. Sophocles' *Antigone*). It has the 'truest reality' in the philosophical form. Cf. sections xiii and xvi.

2. *Idee*: here the idea is not exclusively associated with conceptual thought, though Hegel implies that it is most adequately presented in philosophical thought. The *Idee* is not for Hegel an idea in the mind (a *Vorstellung*), but is the fundamental nature of the universe which art, religion and philosophy attempt to represent. Cf. section xxxvi, n. 5.

xvi. **1.** If the same content is adequately expressed both in art and in philosophy, the philosophical form is superior to the artistic form, since philosophy is further removed from sensory material and involves the pure, conceptual thought that constitutes the essence of mind (cf. section xxi). In addition, the artistic form can adequately express only certain types of content. Conceptual thought, Hegel implies, is not restricted in this way.

2. The Greek gods can be fully and adequately expressed in 'sensuous form', esp. in sculpture but also in poetry; an artistic portrayal of them leaves nothing unsaid about them,

and nothing that could be said better in non-artistic religious or philosophical discourse. This is connected with the fact that Greek gods are held to appear in a human form.

3. Later in the Introduction, Hegel implicitly distinguishes between the 'Christian conception of truth' and the 'spirit of our modern world'. The Christian god appears in human form, and thus, like the Greek gods, determines a certain type of sensory expression of himself; but this sensory expression does not *fully* express him. (See sections [xcvi](#), nn. 2 and 3, and [xcviii](#), n. 1). The spirit of the modern world, by contrast, does not determine any single, natural type of sensory expression of itself (see sections [xvii](#) n. 2, and [cvii](#), n. 1).

4. Hegel conflates two questions: (i) does art adequately express the 'genuine interests' of an age or its conception of 'the truth' (ii) does art give an *authoritative* expression to the truth, or is art subject to assessment by 'thought and reflection', esp. religion and philosophy? The questions are related, in that once religion and philosophy become independent of art they tend to develop content that is too complex for adequate artistic expression. But they are distinct questions, in that e.g. pre-Greek art failed to express its content adequately, not because the content had been developed by thought beyond the resources of art, but because it was insufficiently developed to be adequately expressed in any medium (see section [cv](#)). There is also the difficulty that, although the Greeks had no authoritative body of religious dogma, the Greek artists', esp. Homer's, portrayals of the gods were criticized by philosophers such as Xeno-phanes (c.570–480 BC) and Plato. This suggests, among other things, that question (i) above needs to be split into

two questions: (a) Does a type of art fully and adequately express its content, displaying an internal harmony and completeness that suggests that its form is wholly appropriate to its content? (b) Does it express the highest conceptions of its age? It may be that Greek art satisfies requirement (a), but not (b). (Question (b) is not identical to question (ii): a type, or a work, of art might conceivably be subject to philosophical, etc. assessment, but pass the test because it does adequately express the highest conceptions of the age.)

XVII. **1.** To the objection that some Greek and medieval thinkers found such satisfaction in philosophy, Hegel would reply that they were too few in number to have a marked effect on their ‘epoch and people’.

2. section XVI contrasted Greek art with Christian and modern art; here modern art is contrasted with Greek and late medieval, i.e. Christian, art. In XVI the difficulty was that Christian and modern content is too complex for full and adequate artistic expression; here it is that modern content is too abstract for any appropriate artistic expression. According to XVI, post-Greek art, whatever its merits as art, fails to express the truth fully and authoritatively; here, post-medieval art is seen as *artistically* inferior to Greek and medieval art.

3. Great art requires an environment in which general truths and guides for conduct (the ‘universal’) are expressed not in abstract, but in pictorial, imaginative terms: e.g. the parable of the woman taken in adultery can be depicted in art, but sexual harassment codes cannot. Socrates and Plato, etc. attempted to extract the universal from sensuous phenomena, and their doctrines affected the art of e.g.

Euripides. But again Hegel might reply that their effects on popular thought and on art were neither as widespread nor as long-lived as those of modern 'reflection'.

4. 'Having an opinion and passing judgement about art' is strictly distinct from 'abstract thought'. But Hegel's point is that such an opinion and judgement – in contrast to unreflective appreciation of art as art – will inevitably be couched in the non-sensory, abstract terms available in the environment. Judgements about art are not themselves art.

5. Hegel's two points are: (i) the artist puts 'abstract thought' into his works in order to satisfy his audience; (ii) he inevitably shares the same 'reflective' culture as his audience.

XVIII. 1. This claim excludes the possibility of great and/or intellectually authoritative art in the present and the foreseeable future, but not in the distant future. But such an art of the future would not be 'for us'.

2. *Vorstellung*: 'representation, idea, conception, imagination'. Here (but not always elsewhere: cf. section CXIV, n. 6) it is contrasted with artistic imagination.

3. The art that now provokes reflective judgement is not only modern art, but all art – including the Greek and medieval art that, in its day, achieved its 'highest destiny'. The fault here lies with the modern audience, and with the (modern) artist only in so far as he shares or succumbs to the culture of his audience.

4. On the connection between science, esp. philosophy, of art and modern reflectiveness, see my Introduction. This is Hegel's reply to the objection raised in section VI.

xix. 1. The philosophy of art must explain what art is and why it exists. It must not simply accept as a matter of empirical fact that art appears in the form of architecture, sculpture, etc., but must explain why, by its very nature, it is bound to take these forms. See esp. [Chapter V](#).

2. *Explication*: this refers to the philosopher's thought about art, not to the temporal evolution of art itself.

3. Bosanquet explains 'medium' (*Material*) as 'e.g. colour, sound, heavy matter, etc' and 'element' (*Element*) as 'perhaps more especially any mental function entering into art – sense, imagination, understanding, etc' But since both *Material* and *Element* are contrasted with 'content' (*Inhalt*), Hegel probably intends no such strong distinction between them. It is also unlikely that Hegel would regard the 'mental functions entering into art' as contingent or accidental and thus as setting limits to the necessity with which art unfolds and develops in the way that e.g. the availability of types of stone and pigment do.

4. *Ausdrucksmittel*: lit. 'means of expression' and thus distinct from the *Material* mentioned above.

xx. 1. Not literally: the sensory beauty of e.g. music or painting eludes prosaic description.

2. Hegel attempts to resolve the difficulty in section [XXI](#).

xxi. Hegel's overall argument in this section is this: The 'innermost and essential nature' of the mind is thinking or 'thought [*Gedanke*] and notion [*Begriff*]', i.e. the abstract, non-sensory thoughts that structure all our experience. But the mind does not remain purely abstract and conceptual: if it did so, it could not think or become aware of its thinking.

It 'alienates' or 'externalizes' itself into sensory activities and products, e.g. passions such as anger, perceptions of sensory objects such as trees, conceptions or ideas of such sensory objects, and especially works of art, products whose 'mode of representation admits into itself the semblance of sensuous being and pervades what is sensuous with mind.' Abstract thought is thus implicit in the mind's sensory activities and products, esp. works of art.

Since, however, thought is the 'essence and notion' of mind, it tends to engage in abstract thought about its activities and products, making explicit the thoughts implicit in them, and thus making its products 'genuinely its own'. Mind thus returns to itself out of its alienation. In thinking about its products it does not cease to be aware of or to think about itself: its very nature requires it to think about itself, as well as about other things, and it is by thinking about its products (which contain implicitly the very thoughts that constitute its own essence) that it thinks about itself. But mind cannot in all epochs reclaim its own products for thought. Thought is implicit in the works of the Orient and ancient Greece, but is not yet sufficiently developed or disengaged from the sensory to be able to reflect on its own products. Hence philosophy of art is a modern phenomenon (cf. section [XVIII](#)).

1. Nature is not, like art, a product of mind, and is thus 'unintelligent' (*geistlos*). Hegel seems to infer (mistakenly) that the comprehension of nature is more difficult and less satisfying than that of art.

2. *Begriff*: 'concept, etc.', from the verb *begreifen*, translated by Bosanquet as 'comprehend'. *Begreifen* was originally 'to seize, grasp', but now means, like 'comprehend', (i) 'to

include, comprise, embrace' and (ii) 'to understand, grasp'. Hence Hegel thinks of a *Begriff* as embracing or including what is other than itself. In this section, *Begriff* is not the concept or notion of art or of beauty, but vacillates between (a) 'the concept in general', i.e. conceptual thought or thinking, and (b) 'the concept of the mind', i.e. its nature or essence. See also section [c](#), n. 2.

3. *Entfremdung*: from the verb *entfremden*, 'to estrange, alienate', which derives in turn from the adjective *fremd*, 'alien, foreign, strange'.

4. *Entäußerung*: lit. 'externalization', from the reflexive verb *sich entäußern*, 'to dispose of, part with [something]', but in Hegel 'to externalize', alienate oneself. Hegel here uses *Entäußerung* interchangeably with *Entfremdung*.

5. *das Entfremdete*: lit, 'that which is, has been alienated, estranged'.

6. *Entfremdung*.

7. The relationship of the notion to its products is implicitly compared to a universal genus, e.g. animality, which 'preserves itself in its species, e.g. giraffes, lions, etc., which are animals as well as giraffes etc., and retain the general features of animality as well as their specific differences. Analogously, the sensory products of mind contain abstract thought *implicitly*. But thought can, in addition, dominate its 'other', its sensory products or particularizations by explicitly thinking about them and eliciting the thought(s) that they implicitly contain. In doing this it does not cease to be universal thought or to think about itself. In general, in being aware of an object, I do not cease to be, or to be aware of, myself. The animal kingdom presents no

counterpart to thought's reclamation of its products, except (as Hegel argues in other works) the return of the individual animal into its genus or species in death: e.g. *Philosophy of Nature*, §§375-6.

8. *sich entäussert*.

9. i.e. philosophy.

[XXII](#). 1. But not, as in section [XXI](#), to 'thinking consciousness'.

2. *Inhalt*: in this section, and elsewhere in the Introduction, this term vacillates between the 'highest interests of the mind' and the specific 'theme' of a work.

3. *Haltpunkte*: lit. 'stopping-points – 'ultimate points that the matter of art must not leave hold of, leading ideas that must somehow dominate it.' [B].

4. *Gestaltung*: 'shaping, as if arrangement of shapes' [B]. Hegel does not here use the adjective *plastisch* or the noun *Plastik*. In German aesthetics these refer primarily to sculpture and, more generally, to architecture and bas-relief as well. But Bosanquet often uses the term 'plastic' when Hegel speaks of artistic shaping or form(ing) in general.

[XXVII](#). 1. *Ars Poética*, 11. 343-4.

2. *paränetischen Lehren*: lit. 'paraenetic [i.e. hortatory, advisory] instructions'. *Paränetisch*, like 'paraenetic', derives from the Greek verb *parainein*, 'exhort, advise'.

3. *Bleib im Lande und nähre dich redlich*: Knox, p. 15, compares Psalm 37: 3, and translates 'Dwell in the land and thou shalt be fed'.

[XXVIII](#). 1. 1762. Henry Home, Lord Kames (1698–1782).

2. Knox, p. 16, suggests that Hegel is referring to *Les Beaux Arts réduits à un même principe* (1746) by Charles Batteux (1713-80).

3. *Einleitung in the schönen Wissenschaften* (4 vols., 1756-8), by Karl Wilhelm Ramier (1725-98), was a translation of Batteux's *Cours de belle-lettres, ou principes de la littérature* (5 vols., 1747-50).

4. *beschränkter*. 'restricted, limited, narrow'.

xxix. 1. *Vorstellung*: our ordinary 'idea' or 'conception' of beauty.

xxx. 1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832).

2. Johann Heinrich Meyer, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste bei den Griechen*, continued by F. W. Riemer (3 vols., 1824-36). 'I am not sure if I have given the best rendering [of *bildenden Künste*]. It is wider than *Plastik*, because it includes painting and architecture' [B], Knox, p. 17, prefers 'visual arts', for the reason that all arts, even music and poetry, are 'formative'. But 'formative' is closer to the German.

3. Aloys Hirt (1759-1839), professor of archaeology at Berlin and a friend of Hegel's.

xxxi. 1. '*Die Horen [The Seasons]* – the monthly magazine whose establishment by Schiller, in 1795, first brought Schiller and Goethe into contact. It only existed for three years' [B]. Hirt's essay was entitled *Versuch über das Kunstschöme* ('Essay on Artistic Beauty').

2. *des Charakteristischen*: the adjective is used as a noun.

3. 'That is, not a caprice of nature or art, but the perfection of the object *after its kind*' [B].

4. *Inhalt*: here the theme of a work. See S. Bungay, *Beauty and Truth: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 371f. for a discussion of Hegel's account of 'form' and 'content'.

5. 'Drama, Greek *drama* = *Handlung*, "action"' [B],

XXXII. 1. *das Karikierte*: lit. 'what is caricatured'. What is caricatured may be the essential or characteristic features of an object, rather than its peripheral features, and the caricature will then satisfy Hirt's definition of beauty.

2. Such a caricature may contravene Hirt's definition, not by introducing superfluous, uncharacteristic details, but by superfluous exaggeration of the characteristic.

3. Hegel's thought in this and the following sentence is obscure. There are three main difficulties: (i) Does he mean that caricature is *always* the characterization of the ugly, is *sometimes* the characterization of the ugly, or is *similar in effect to* the characterization of the ugly? (ii) Does he mean that the object caricatured is ugly, that the feature of it caricatured is ugly, or that the caricature itself is ugly? (iii) Is the ugliness a distortion of the ugly object or of the artistic characterization of it?

In general, Hegel's argument is this: A feature or object that can be caricatured is likely to be ugly, or at least made to look ugly by the caricature. In fact a caricature of an object that is not in itself especially ugly is similar in effect to a non-caricatural characterization of an object that is in itself ugly. But this has no bearing on the question whether caricature can be beautiful, since Hirt's definition leaves it open that a characterization of an ugly object may itself be beautiful. Thus ugliness relates to the 'content': the theme or

object represented may be ugly. Hirt's principle of the characteristic allows the portrayal of the ugly and does not tell us what is to form the content of art.

It is not clear from this section how Hegel himself would answer the traditional question 'Can a portrayal of an ugly object be beautiful?' or even whether he would regard it as a legitimate question. In general he uses 'beautiful' not in the sense of 'pretty', in which it contrasts with 'ugly', but as a general term of aesthetic approval which may be applied to ugly objects, or at least to representations of ugly objects. It is also unclear how Hirt would answer it: it would depend on whether the ugliness of the object is seen as 'characteristic' or as peripheral, e.g. on whether the object is seen as an ugly member of its species, or as a standard member of an ugly species.

XXXIII. 1. Anton Raphael Mengs (1728–79), a painter and theorist of art; a friend of Winckelmann.

2. Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-68), a theorist and historian of art, whose admiration for Greek art, esp. sculpture, greatly influenced his contemporaries and successors, including Hegel.

3. S. Bungay, in *Beauty and Truth*, p. 197, n. 59, locates this quotation in *Philostrats Gemalde*, a translation of Philostratus 'Images with Goethe's own additions. Goethe describes a painting of Hercules' taming of the mares of Diomedes, who ate his friend Abderus while he was fighting Diomedes. Goethe adds that we are shown enough to identify the theme, but not e.g. Abderus's half-eaten body. Bungay, p. 38, explains Goethe's statement as meaning that 'the successful treatment of anything in art, no matter how disturbing, will

result in beauty only if what is shown is significant, and significance was the criterion used by the Ancients for the inclusion of anything in art.'

4. No distinction is here intended between *Bedeutung* ('significance, meaning') and *Inhalt* ('content') Both ambiguously refer to: (i) The theme of a work e.g. the taming of Diomedes's mares. This is the sense intended by Goethe and by Hegel in his discussion of Hirt. (ii) The deeper meaning of a work, for which the theme serves as a mode of expression.

5. This suggests that the 'meaning' of a work is not its theme, but a deeper meaning – sense (ii) of n. 4 above.

6. The analogy between, on the one hand, the external form of a work and its content, and, on the other, the body and the soul, does not in itself favour either interpretation of *Inhalt* and *Bedeutung*, but can accommodate both. An account of the body in terms of its shape, colours, etc. is analogous to the 'lines, curves', etc. of a painting or statue. An account of it in such terms as 'eye', 'smile', etc. is analogous to the theme of a work. An account of a person in such terms as 'desire', 'love', 'conscious', etc. is analogous to the deeper meaning of a work. But the claim that the meaning is 'other than what shows itself in the immediate appearance' suggests that the meaning is deeper than the theme of the work. On either interpretation, the implication of the analogy for Hegel is that the meaning and its outer expression fully coincide, that is, that every external feature of a body or a work of art expresses some aspect of its inner meaning, and every aspect of its inner meaning finds expression in some feature of its outer surface.

7. The contrast with 'lines, etc' suggests that the meaning is

the theme, but the equation with 'life, etc' suggests that it is the deeper meaning conveyed by the theme.

8. Since Hirt's principle concerned the theme, while Hegel's interpretation of Goethe's principle predominantly concerns the deeper meaning, the two principles are quite distinct.

9. The characterization of the content as 'inner' and of the form as 'outer' also implies their coincidence, as in n. 6 above: see e.g. Hegel's *Logic*, the first part of his *Encyclopaedia*, §§138–40.

[xxxiv](#). 1. There is no doubt that he means Shakespeare, who was unpopular in Germany before Goethe's time. *Vide* [Goethe's] *Wilhelm Master*'[B].

2. e.g. F. Schlegel's 'On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians' in *The Aesthetic and Miscellaneous Works* of Friedrich von Schlegel, tr. E. J. Millington (London, 1849). Cf. section LXXXVI.

3. The adjective *romantisch* and the noun *Romantik* referred originally to the medieval romance of chivalry. Hegel uses them in two distinct ways: (i) For a general form of art which, in contrast to the symbolic and classical art forms, predominated in the art of the Christian era, i.e. from the early Middle Ages to the present. See section [CVII](#). (ii) For the Romantic circle of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the art inspired or favoured by it. See sections [LXXXVII](#)–XCIII. The predominant sense here is (ii), but the two senses cannot be sharply distinguished, since the Romantic circle developed the notion of romantic art in sense (i): see e.g. F. Schlegel's 'Contributions in Aid of Romantic Poetry and Genius', with studies of Boccaccio, medieval romances and Shakespeare, in *The Aesthetic and*

Miscellaneous Works.

4. *Begriff*: the 'concept' of the beautiful.

5. *Begriff*: approximately 'conceptual thought'.

[xxxv](#). 1. See e.g. *Goethe on Art*, ed. J. Gage (London, 1980).

[xxxvi](#). 1. *Idee*: here it differs little from *Begriff*.

2. *Gattung*: 'genius' in Bosanquet's text is a misprint.

3. *Begriff*.

4. *Begriff*: i.e. conceptual thought.

5. Here and in the rest of this section 'Idea' and 'idea' translate *Idee*. Hegel intertwines *Idee* as a translation of Plato's Greek term *idea* with *Idee* in his own sense, a sense which derives not only from Plato, but also from e.g. Kant. In Plato's sense an idea (or 'form', *eidos*) is not only a concept or a universal – e.g. beauty, in contrast to particular beautiful things; it is also a sort of individual, since it is itself supremely beautiful and, in Plato's view, more worthy of contemplation than any particular beautiful object. Although the idea of beauty confers on particular objects such beauty as they have, it is not itself dependent on these objects, and the philosopher, once he has grasped the idea of beauty, has nothing to gain from the contemplation of particular beautiful objects. For Hegel, the *Idee* in its 'logico-metaphysical nature' is more than merely the *Begriff*; it is the *Begriff* together with its reality or existence. (Occasionally Hegel uses *Idee* more or less synonymously with *Begriff*, in part in conformity with the ordinary use of *Idee* – or with other philosophical usages than his own, in part in view of the fact that, in his view, a *Begriff* is not sharply distinct

from its reality, but intrinsically tends to realize itself.) But not any entity to which we might apply a concept, e.g. a stone, is an *Idee*, but only diversified and structured unities that develop in accordance with, and are governed by, a logical plan: esp. a living organism, a systematic body of knowledge, an ethically ordered society, a work of art, and God, the absolute or the universe as a whole. In application to art, Hegel's main uses of *Idee* are these:

(i) The absolute *Idee* is what art attempts to express: the fundamental, self-realizing essence of the world. Art is one of its ways of manifesting or realizing *itself*, not simply one of our ways of looking at it. See sections [XL](#), n. 3, and [XLVII](#), n. 2.

(ii) A work of art is itself an *Idee*, a content realized in and fully coinciding with its sensory form, like a soul realized in a body – one of Hegel's main examples of a concept (soul) together with its reality (body) constituting an *Idee*. In this sense, Hegel tends to equate the *Idee* of beauty with the *Ideal*. See sections [CIII](#), n. 1, and [CXI](#), n. 5.

(iii) The *Idee* of art or beauty as such also realizes itself in art forms and then in particular arts and individual works of art (see [Chapter V](#)). In this section, Hegel criticizes Plato (mainly in the *Symposium* and *Greater Hippias*) for ignoring the realization of the idea of beauty and thus, implicitly, for discussing the concept to the exclusion of the idea. (In the *Republic*, Plato criticizes works and styles of art, but is not especially interested in their *beauty*.)

[xxxvii](#). 1. *Begriff*.

2. 'The exhibition of particulars as contained in the principle, and of the principle as contained in particulars'

[B], See [Chapter V](#).

[XXXVIII](#). 1. *Begriff*.

[XXXIX](#). 1. Hegel exploits the similarity of *beweisen* ('to demonstrate, prove') and *weisen* ('to show, point out').

2. *Zufälligkeit*: lit. 'contingency'. Here and below, an 'accidental question' is a question whose answer is contingent or accidental. E.g. men may or may not have the idea (*Vorstellung*) of beauty and perceive objects as beautiful; thus it is contingent, or an accidental question, whether they do so or not.

[XL](#). 1. Here, and usually in the rest of this section, 'idea' is *Begriff*. In section [XXXIX](#), 'idea' was *Vorstellung*, the informal conception of beauty that men may or may not have, not the logically derived and justified *concept* of beauty.

2. After 'study', Bosanquet omits a sentence: 'The only course remaining is to take up the idea [*Begriff*] of art *lemmatically*, so to speak; this is what happens in all *particular* philosophical sciences when they are to be dealt with in isolation.' To take up a concept lemmatically is to assume that it has been proved or justified. This is not, or not only, what Hegel does in the following sections: he builds up the concept of beauty by way of an examination of ordinary ideas about it.

3. The universe is 'one single organic totality'. It 'develops out of its own conception [*Begriff*]', i.e. out of the 'logical idea' or fundamental logical plan, which Hegel attempts to portray in his *Science of Logic* (1812–16) and the first part of the *Encyclopaedia*. The main 'parts' into which it develops are – apart from the logical idea itself – nature and spirit or

mind. But it also develops into different levels of nature (space, time, bodies, etc.) and different phases of spirit, the main ones being 'subjective spirit' (roughly, individual psychology), 'objective spirit' (social and political institutions, world history, etc.), and 'absolute spirit' (art, religion and philosophy). (Except in the case of some phases of spirit, the development is non-temporal.) The universe 'returns into itself in two senses: (i) The parts and their subdivisions are necessarily and systematically connected to each other: e.g. nature necessarily develops into spirit, space into time, etc. (ii) At its higher levels, spirit, esp. absolute spirit, unifies the world into 'one single world of truth' by discerning these necessary connections and their source in the logical idea.

The system forms a *Krone*, 'crown, coronal', since it is a unified circle (the 'parts') with a single centre (the *Begrijf*). It is a circle in the sense not only that it is systematically interconnected, but also that it returns to its beginning, since the climax of the system, philosophy, involves (awareness of) the logical idea with which we began. Each of the main parts is itself a circle, both in the sense that it is a relatively self-contained 'sphere', and in the sense that it returns to its beginning. E.g. art begins with the general concept of art, which develops into the art forms and then into the particular arts. But the last art considered, poetry, is the 'universal' art and thus a return to the concept within the realm of the particular (see sections [CXIV](#) and [CXV](#)). Each of these circles or spheres is connected with others. E.g. the 'backward' out of which art 'derives itself is the sphere of objective spirit, esp. its higher phases, the state and world history, while the 'forward' to which art impels itself is religion.

Philosophy is both the highest phase of this system and an attempt to portray the system and its interconnections. The *Encyclopaedia* is Hegel's fullest attempt to do this. Strictly speaking, the concept of art should not be 'presupposed', but systematically derived from its antecedents both in the world and in the philosophical account of it. (Hegel's – not wholly lucid – derivation of absolute spirit and of art occurs in the *Encyclopaedia*, §§553–6.) But since this would require a replay of the whole system, deriving objective spirit from subjective spirit, and that in turn from nature, Hegel prefers to develop it from an examination of various common 'ideas' or 'views' (*Vorstellungen*) of art and beauty.

XLI. 1. *aus dem Sinnlichen*: i.e. from sensory material.

2. *Sinn*: i.e. the senses, esp. sight and hearing.

3. *Zweck*: 'purpose, aim, end', not 'end' in the sense of 'ending, conclusion'.

XLII. 1. Hegel exploits the similarity of *bewusstes* ('conscious') and *gewusst* ('known'), both deriving from *wissen*, 'to know'.

2. Hegel exploits the similarity of *machen* ('to do, make') and *nach-machen* ('to imitate, copy').

3. Hegel attempts to explain why successful artistic activity cannot be guaranteed by the mechanical following of rules, and perhaps why it cannot be guaranteed by teaching, by the fact that art has a 'spiritual' content or theme. This is not correct. Not only art, but also many non-spiritual, non-thematic activities, such as swimming, can be taught to almost anyone to some level of proficiency, but can be taught to the highest level only to a few; such teaching requires far more than the provision of explicit rules.

(Schools for the teaching of painting existed in Sicyon as early as the fourth century BC.) Art differs from other activities that are not (like e.g. painting by numbers or elementary arithmetic) wholly governed by rules in such ways as the following: (i) One can be a good swimmer by copying another good swimmer, since one piece of good swimming does not differ significantly from another. But great or good art is significantly different from other great art, and thus cannot be produced simply by copying a great artist, or by altering his work in simple, mechanical ways, (ii) A great philosopher, scientist or chess player can usually explain in retrospect the procedures by which he arrived at his results, while an artist cannot. This may be related to the fact that, at least in small-scale works of art, every detail counts aesthetically, so that the work (unlike philosophy or science) does not admit of paraphrase.

XLIII. **1.** Hegel agrees that talent and genius cannot be acquired by one's 'own self-conscious activity' and that they are necessary for good art. He does not agree that they are sufficient for good or great art.

2. Cf. Part 1, ch. m. c. of the *Aesthetics* (Knox, *LA*, 1, pp. 281ff., esp. 283–4), where Hegel suggests that genius is the general capacity and energy to produce art, while talent is a specific, esp. an 'external', skill, such as violin-playing or singing. Hegel's notion of genius was dominated by the figure of Goethe, who was held to have excelled in all branches of literature, in two branches of natural science (biology and the theory of colour), and to be at least a competent critic of painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.

XLIV. **1.** Bosanquet refers to Goethe's *Gotz von Berlichingen* (1773) and Schiller's *Die Räuber* (1781).

[XLV](#). 1. *gedankenlosen Empfindung*: ‘feeling, sensation without thought’. Hegel excludes thoughts that cannot be expressed in words. Cf. sections [LI](#), nn. 1 and 7, and [CXIII](#).

2. Knox (p. 28) suggests that Hegel is thinking of Mozart.

3. ‘The *Iphigenie* was completed in Goethe’s thirty-eighth year, fourteen years later than *Götz*. The bulk of his great works are of the same date as the *Iphigenie*, or later... Schiller’s *Wallenstein* was completed after his thirty-fifth year’ [B],

4. Later Greeks diverge greatly in their accounts of Homer’s life, though they tend to agree that he was blind, poor and widely travelled. They probably knew little more about him than we do. Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824) had argued, in his *Prolegomenain Homerum* (1795), that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were not the work of a single author, but a collection of orally transmitted poems put together at a later date. Hegel disagreed with this view, arguing that each of these ‘national bibles’ is a unified work of art and must have been the work substantially of a single author (Knox, *LA*, n, pp. 1049-50, 1087-8).

[XLVI](#). 1. *Schein*: cf. sections [VI](#), n. 3, and [XIV](#), n. 1.

2. *Vorstellung*: cf. section [CXIV](#). This is a difficulty for the view expressed later in the *Aesthetics* (Knox, *LA*, 1, pp. 103–4), that art differs from religion in that it employs a sensory medium, while religion employs pictorial *Vorstellungen*. But Hegel would reply that poetry forms the transition of art into religion, and that what ensures that poetry is art is its systematic relationship to other, strictly sensory, arts and to the concept of beauty.

3. Cf. section 11, n. 1. 'Mind' translates *Geist* 'of the spiritual' is *des Geistigen*, from the adjective *geistig* 'spiritual, mental'.

4. 'Free from irrelevancies' [B],

5. *göttliche Ideale*. This probably means 'God or the gods, who are ideals', and is not simply equivalent to the 'human interest, the spiritual value' referred to above.

XLVII. 1. *Göttliches*: not a 'god', but a 'divine element' as below.

2. The argument is this: God and man are not two co-ordinate producers, the one of nature, the other of artefacts. God created and 'works in' man: thus man's products are as much God's products as nature is. There is thus a 'divine element' in both man and nature. But nature and artefacts are not only on a par. Since God is 'spirit', human activity and production are closer to the essence of God than nature is.

The argument, and esp. the claim that God is spirit, is not simply *ad hominem*, but represents Hegel's own beliefs. But his beliefs operate at two levels: at the level of religion and at that of philosophy or conceptual thought (Hegel believes that religion and philosophy present the same content as each other and as art, only in different forms: see e.g. section XIII):

(1) At the level of religion, i.e. Lutheranism as interpreted by Hegel, God is a spirit or mind. But God is not an independent, fully formed spirit who then creates a world and man. He is not distinct from nature and man, but achieves self-consciousness only in and through man's attainment of self-consciousness. He develops to full spirituality only in nature and man. God, like man himself,

becomes self-conscious only in his products.

(2) At the level of philosophy, the religious triad, God-nature-man/spirit, becomes the triad: logical idea or concept (i.e. the *Begriff* of section [XL](#), n. 3, the thoughts or logical structure embedded both in nature and in the human mind)-nature-man/spirit. Hegel regards this conception of the world as licensing the claim that the 'absolute' (viz. the fundamental nature of the universe) is spirit, and as the philosophical counterpart of the religious view of God as spirit, for three main reasons: (I) The logical idea, the essential core of the world-process, consists of 'thoughts' which also form the core of the human mind (see section [LVII](#), n. 1). (ii) The whole process (which is temporal only at the phase of spirit) – the development of the logical idea into an alien or external nature and the reclamation of this by the practical and cognitive activities of men – is analogous to the mind's becoming conscious of an alien object, and then, by coming to grips with this object practically and cognitively, eventually acquiring self-consciousness. The world-process, Hegel believes, can only be explained on the model of spirit, not e.g. in mechanical or biological terms, (iii) The highest phase of the process – man/spirit – confers its overtly spiritual character on the whole process by cognitively and practically dominating, subsuming or 'sublating' (see section [CXIII](#), n. 2 on *aufheben*) the merely natural phase of the process, so that nature and thus the world as a whole is 'spiritualized'.

Hegel's view entails that all artefacts (e.g. knives and forks), and not only art, are superior to nature. Art moreover need not be explicitly religious in content. But art, esp. religious art or at least art that expresses a vision of the whole world-process rather than some peripheral aspect of

it, contributes more to the development of man's, and thus of God's, self-consciousness than do the production, use and contemplation of knives and forks.

XLVIII. 1. Hegel's tendency to speak of 'man's need' (*das Bedürfnis des Menschen*), even when it is, as here, qualified as the need to *produce* works of art, blurs the distinction between 'Why do (some, many, or even, at some level, all) men need to produce art?' and 'Why do (some, etc.) men need to contemplate art?' The two questions are not always distinguished in this and the following sections.

2. It is not clear whether the question is 'Does man have a(n absolute) need of art?' or 'Why does he have a(n absolute) need of art?' Presumably both, since Hegel has not yet established the existence of the need.

3. The notion of an absolute, in contrast to a contingent, need of e.g. art involves three distinct ideas: (i) that one needs it for its own sake, not for some further purpose, which can be met by something other than art, e.g. by snooker or by philosophy; (ii) that one does really *need* and could not do without it; (iii) that the want or need fulfilled by e.g. art is a 'high' or the 'highest' want or need, i.e. spiritual or intellectual, esp. to the highest degree, (i) and (iii) are distinct, but related, in that if e.g. philosophy satisfies higher needs than art, the question arises why we cannot dispense with art and make do with philosophy. Hegel's tendency to equate (ii) and (iii) coheres with his belief that man's role in the world-process is to achieve self-consciousness, i.e. an insight into the whole universe and his place in it. Although this does not require that the attainment of such self-consciousness should be the explicit aim of every human being, he also tends to see even

mundane human actions (e.g. eating or fighting) not as attempts to satisfy specific, esp. physical, desires, but as stemming from an overall need to express, become aware of, and develop oneself as a human being. See section XLIX.

4. 'i.e. it requires a definite or determinate answer, depending on a number of ideas which cannot be explained in an introduction' [B]. The inadequacies of Hegel's answer in the Introduction stem from conceptual problems rather than brevity, and are not significantly remedied elsewhere in his works.

XLIX. 1. 'i.e. considered generally, apart from the wishes and, perhaps, selfish aims of individual artists' [B]. But, in view of the fact that 'form' and 'formal' usually contrast with 'content', Hegel probably means 'art simply as art, regardless of its content, of whether it portrays gods or men, and even of whether it is music or painting'.

2. The claim that art arises from a 'universal and absolute' need (viz. for practical and theoretical activity) does not entail that art is itself a universal and absolute need, just as e.g. the fact that my eating figs arises from my absolute need to *eat* does not entail that I have an absolute need to eat figs. But Hegel is aware of this: see section L, n. 8.

3. *denkendes Bewusstsein*: Here it is not, as in section XXI, explicit, conceptual (and therefore non-artistic) thinking, since Hegel is trying to explain why we need to produce art, and to contemplate it as art, not why we need to think or to philosophize about art. The expression implies rather that all human consciousness involves thought *implicitly*, and that it culminates in the explicit conceptual thought that is required for full self-consciousness.

4. Man is conscious both of himself and of everything else.

5. The German text reads: *und nur durch dies tätige Fürsichsein Geist ist*, lit. 'and is mind [or spirit] only in virtue of this active being-for-self. This makes a better point than Bosanquet's rendering, which – unless, with Bosanquet, *Fürsichsein* is translated as e.g. 'self-realizedness' – simply repeats what has been said earlier in the sentence. The notion of being for oneself [*für sich*), or something's being for oneself, combines the ideas of (i) being aware of oneself or of something else, and (ii) being explicit and actual, not implicit and potential.

6. Hegel has several reasons for claiming that man must recognize only himself (*nur sich selber zu erkennen hat*) not only in 'what is summed out of his inner self (e.g. his thoughts, anger, etc.), but also in 'what is received from without' – apart, that is, from his own body:

(i) He holds, with Kant, that external objects involve thoughts, the same thoughts as those that constitute the core of the mind. (But, unlike Kant, he does not believe that objects involve thoughts only because we impose our thoughts on sensory material.) Cognition requires the recognition of such thoughts (e.g. causality, forces, laws, etc.), and thus of ourselves, in objects.

(ii) I can only become aware of myself by becoming aware of something else: see section [CXI](#), n. 4. (But this does not immediately entail that I must recognize *myself* in something else).

(iii) He wants to secure a parallelism (or convergence) between theory and practice, esp. in view of the fact that art straddles the boundary between them. Thus just as in

practice I make my mark on external objects, in theory I see myself in them.

7. *sich selbst zu erkennen*: see n. 6 above on the parallel between theory and practice.

8. 'Reality derivative from his own reality' [B]. But it is unclear whether Hegel means (i) effects in the world that stem from one's own activity; (ii) effects which, in view of e.g. their regularity, could only have been produced by a human, or by oneself (e.g. parks, furrows); or (iii) effects which are like oneself (e.g. statues of men). Bosanquet has (i) in mind. Hegel also leaves it unclear why one should want to strip the world of its 'foreignness' (*Fremdheit*: cf. section [XXI](#) on 'alienation'). His metaphysical (and aesthetic) xenophobia coheres with his overall world-view (see section [XLVII](#), esp. n. 2) ; with his belief that one can become aware of oneself only in the other (see n. 6 above) ; and with his belief that freedom consists in not being dominated or determined by something other than oneself (cf. section L,n. 4).

9. *Produktion seiner selbst* lit. 'production of oneself'. Again (cf. n. 8 above) it is unclear whether Hegel means (i) producing an effect; (ii) producing a specifically human effect; (iii) producing an effect that is like a human being; or (iv) gaining knowledge of oneself, by means of (i)–(iii), and thereby altering and developing one's nature. Both self-cognition and self-production alter the self, in Hegel's view, and extend its boundaries. The self does not end with me, my mental states (e.g. anger) or even my body. Just as cultivation of my body makes it, properly speaking, mine, so cultivation (and cognition) of external objects makes them extensions of myself.

Hegel seems, in this section, to associate art with practice rather than theory: the practical effects one produces – e.g. rings in water or specifically human regularities, decorations, etc. – are recognized as such, but they need have no content, meaning or theme. But he probably believes that art proper involves both theory and practice. At lower levels (e.g. stone-throwing), practice is distinct from theory. But at higher levels, practice involves the production of meaningful objects (paintings, poems, etc.) that are similar to such theoretical products as textbooks.

Hegel's account of practice here seems to be biased towards artistic production by its concentration on self-expressive actions, such as stone-throwing, at the expense of actions for specific purposes, such as catching fish to eat. In reply he would draw attention to the elements of self-assertion and self-expression involved in such activities as dressing, fishing or eating, and also argue that e.g. fishing for food presupposes actions which acquaint me with my needs, my powers and with e.g. the river, and the world in general, as an appropriate field for my activity.

10. *Gestalt*: 'He means as in attitude, bearing, gentle movement, etc' [B].

11. *Bildung*: also 'culture, cultivation, formation, refinement, etc'

L. **1.** *allgemeine Bedürfniss zur Kunst*: lit. 'universal need for art'. But Bosanquet's translation is justified: in so far as Hegel has established a universal need for art (rather than simply e.g. to throw stones), it is a need to produce, or to express oneself in, art, rather than to contemplate the art produced by others.

2. *Gegenstand*: this need not be a solid, three-dimensional object, but may be the object e.g. of an inquiry.

3. No distinction is drawn here between theory and practice. One must recognize oneself in things, whether this is achieved by theory or by practice.

4. Freedom involves not being dominated by something other than oneself: cf. section XLIX,n. 8.

5. i.e. theoretical activity.

6. i.e. practical activity.

7. In section XLIX, man's reduplication of himself was primarily his becoming aware of himself and of other things, even when this awareness involves the production of external effects. Here the reduplication is primarily man's external products and activities, XLIXa n d Lgive correspondingly different accounts of the relationship between theory and practice. In XLIX,theory and practice are two ways of becoming 'for oneself, and practice is the production of (specifically human) effects, independent of, and parallel to, what one has learnt theoretically. In L, theory is one's way of becoming 'for oneself, while practice is the external realization or expression of this being-for-self, not only for oneself, but also for others. On both accounts, we might ask: Why do men need practice, as well as theory? The reply of XLIXis that one cannot adequately think theoretically about oneself or other things, unless one has first produced external effects. The reply of Lis that one needs to realize or express what one already knows for oneself and for others, L'sreply ultimately requires XLIX'S,since, granted that in Hegel's view thoughts or knowledge require some external expression, we can still

ask: Why must they be expressed in practical activities or external products such as works of art, rather than in prosaic words? The reply to this is: It is not possible to express at least certain thoughts in prosaic words unless one has first expressed them in other, less prosaic ways. The divergence between XLIX and L represents a shift in Hegel's thought away from the production of rings in water and bodily decorations, whose only meaning is that they were produced by oneself, to meaningful works of art, which express one's 'being-for-self, etc.

8. In the Introduction to Part 1 of the *Aesthetics* (Knox, 1, pp. 9iff.). Cf. section XLIX, n. 2.

II. 1. *Empfindung*: this also means 'sensation' and is thus closely connected with the senses. When Hegel speaks below of the 'feeling of justice' etc., he uses the less sensory and more intellectual *Gefühl*.

2. 1729-86. Hegel is thinking of his *über the Empfindungen* (1755) and *Betrachtungen über das Erhabene, u.s.w.* (1757).

3. 'i.e. you cannot describe or picture it definitely, like a thing with attributes, although you feel it in yourself [B].

4. 'i.e. you may be afraid of anything: the fact that you are afraid does not in itself indicate what you are afraid of [B],

5. Hegel's point is not that e.g. justice can be the object of different feelings or emotions, that we can hope, grieve, etc. for justice (no one could plausibly suppose this to shed light on the nature of justice), but that justice, morality, religion, etc. appear in feelings that are distinct both from each other and from hope, fear, etc. The feeling (or sense) of justice, e.g., is specific to justice; unlike fear, it cannot have a wide

range of objects, and one cannot have that precise feeling about love or religion. But this fact, he argues, sheds little light on justice.

6. 'My private feeling is compared to a small circle, in which morality, justice, etc. may *be*, but have not room to show their nature. Feeling allows of no definition' [B].

7. In this section, Hegel conflates two distinct questions: (i) Does art essentially express or arouse feelings? (ii) Can aesthetics profitably examine the feelings expressed or aroused by art? His answer to (i) is: Feeling, if involved at all, is subsidiary; the varied contents of art do not correspond to the differences of our feelings. His answer to (ii) is: There is little of interest to be said about feelings. These claims are not the same. One might argue e.g. that music expresses and arouses definite and various feelings, but that little of interest can be *said* about them, since the feelings do not correspond to our words for feelings and can only be expressed in, and aroused by, music. Section XLV refers to 'feeling without thought' in connection with music (see XLV, n. 1). But firstly, he there uses *Empfindung* and may have in mind 'sensations' rather than emotions, and, secondly, he would infer from this not that music is an interesting and valuable addition to language, even if we can say little of interest about it *in* language, but that music (or at least the variations between different pieces and types of music) is not very interesting or valuable, but at most entertaining and decorative.

LII. 1. *Schönheit* and *schön*, like 'beauty' and 'beautiful', are often used in a fairly restricted sense, such that what is beautiful need not be interesting, profound, elevated, significant or sublime. 'Beauty' in this sense, approximating

to 'prettiness', 'charm', etc. is inappropriate to e.g. *War and Peace* or the *Iliad*, but it is, in Hegel's view, the main concern of 'taste' (*Geschmack*). For Hegel, by contrast, beauty is whatever makes for aesthetic merit. Cf. xxxii,n. 3.

liii. 1. 'All its positive aspects or relations, age, phase, artist's history, etc' [B]. Cf. section [xxiv](#).

liv. 1. *Begriff*.

lv. 1. *Vorstellung*.

2. 'Its sensuous aspect has no independent warrant or justification, as that, for example, of an animal has in its own separate life. So it must simply be such as is enough to appeal to man's mind, e.g. mere surface painting' [B].

lvi. 1. *Geist* is not contrasted with 'sensuous apprehension', 'desire', etc., which are 'modes' or aspects of *Geist*. But the *Geist* is dominated by its higher, intellectual aspect, which motivates and directs its development. This explains in part Hegel's tendency to intellectualize physical desires.

2. Hegel gives a somewhat intellectualist account of desire, as of action in general: it emerges from the mind's urge to 'realize' its 'inner nature' in things. Cf. n. 1.

3. A man wants to eat e.g. the apple *himself*, as a sensuous 'particular' (*Einzelner*): it is irrelevant to his purpose whether others want, or ought, to eat apples. (It is, by contrast, relevant whether others find an object as *beautiful* as oneself.) He desires not all apples or anything that is an apple, but this apple as a particular; and he desires it simply as this apple, not in virtue of its general properties, chemical

constituents, etc.

4. This is ambiguous. It may mean either (i) that the desire is (among other things) a desire 'to show, etc.', or (ii) that the desire is a desire to do something which will, as a matter of fact, 'show, etc'

(ii) is the more reasonable claim, but Hegel is likely to have (i) in mind. Both claims are more appropriate to the desire to eat than to e.g. sexual desire.

5. *nichtigen*: lit. 'null, nugatory'.

6. The subject is not free, i.e. self-determined. The object of one's will and one's pursuit of it are not determined on rational grounds.

7. One's desire for the apple is determined by other things, esp. by the apple itself. It is also 'related to' other things, esp. the apple: it is a desire for the apple, not for some more elevated (and less external) object, such as philosophical thinking or public service. (This complaint is not very easy to reconcile with Hegel's intellectual account of desire: see nn. 1, 2 and 4 above.) Hegel agrees with e.g. Plato (against Hume) that it is more rational to want some things than others.

8. Section XLIX distinguished between the theoretical and the practical aspects of mind, and associated art more closely with the practical. Section LVI introduces a triad: (i) purely contemplative, but non-intellectual, sensory apprehension; (ii) practical desire; and (iii) contemplative and non-appetitive, but intellectual and quasi-sensory apprehension. It associates art with the more 'theoretic' (iii). The reason for the discrepancy is that XLIX dealt with the producer of art, while LVI deals with its contemplator or

audience. The artist *qua* artist does not have ordinary, practical desires with respect to his material (e.g. marble), his theme (e.g. Antigone) or his model. But he does have such desires as are relevant to his art, e.g. to carve marble. Hegel's intellectualist account of non-aesthetic desires makes them hard to distinguish from the artist's desires, but they differ in such ways as these: (i) the after-effects of the satisfaction of a non-aesthetic desire are of only incidental interest, while it is essential for the artist that the effects of his activity, e.g. the carved marble, should persist; (ii) the artist wants to contemplate his work and to display it for the approval of others, but this is only of incidental interest to someone who wants to eat an apple.

In contrast to the artist, the audience *qua* audience has no desire to e.g. carve the marble of which the statue consists: the artist has already done that job for them. Here, as elsewhere, Hegel fails to distinguish clearly between the artist and his audience. This is an important distinction, since art, unlike e.g. road-building, is not consumer-led: the great artist does not respond to his audience's antecedent desire for his type of art, but moulds his audience and their aesthetic (and other) desires.

LVII. 1. Desires etc. belong to the outer surface of the individual 'subject' (i.e. person) and vary from person to person. Thoughts (e.g. of force, of being, a scientific law, etc.) belong to the inner core of a person and do not differ from one to another (except in so far as they are, like e.g. arithmetic, more explicitly developed in one person than another).

2. A thinker relates to objects not as individuals, differentiated by their sensory features, but as instances of

universal thoughts that constitute their essence. The subject and the object mirror each other: in both cases, the sensory (including the desires of the subject and the desirable features of the object) is individual and variable, while the conceptual is universal.

3. As in Lvi, Hegel has in mind the audience, not the artist. Neither the artist nor his audience treats (like the scientist) the sensory surface of things or of art merely as an occasion for conceptual reflection. But it is not true of the artist that he accepts his theme or his material (or even the work of other artists) 'just as it displays itself *qua* external object'. This applies only to his audience.

LVIII.1. After 'thought' Bosanquet omits a sentence which can be translated as: 'The work of art is *not yet* pure thought, but despite its sensuousness it is *no longer* mere material existence, like stones, plants and organic life. The sensuous in the work of art is itself an ideal [*ideelles*] sensuous, but since it is not the ideality [*das Ideelle*] of thought, it is also still there externally as a thing.' On the distinction between *ideell* and *ideal*, see section CXI, n. 5.

2. *Schein*.

3. 'Nothing can be tasted which is not dissolved in a liquid' [B].

4. *Anschauung(en)*: often translated, in Kant and Hegel, as 'intuition (s)'. Bosanquet's 'imaginable ideas' is mistaken. To be co-ordinate with 'shapes' and 'sounds', *Anschauungen* must mean 'sensory, esp. visual, intuitions' or 'sights' (so Knox, p. 39), i.e. patches of colour, etc. Bosanquet had poetry in mind, but Hegel is thinking of painting.

5. 'Abstract forms, which are to reality as a diagram to a picture' [B].

6. *Gestalt*: lit. 'figure, shape, form'.

7. That the sensuous is 'spiritualized' (i.e. is presented as a mere semblance, and not in the company of complete, concrete objects) does not entail that the 'spiritual appears in sensuous shape', i.e. that the sensory semblance *as such* conveys a deep spiritual (or religious) meaning.

LIX. 1. The possessor of the skill does not know how, or cannot state explicit rules by which, he performs the corresponding activity: e.g. juggling.

2. Hegel's reason for denying that a good poem can be produced by these 'two separate activities' is that a poem so produced would lack aesthetic unity and amount to a prosaic message with added adornments. As he describes the activities, however – writing a piece in prose and then turning it into poetry – the two activities are not 'separate', resulting in two distinct products requiring subsequent combination (like the separate production of a Christmas tree and of decorations for it) : the second activity presupposes the first, and itself results in the complete poem. It is thus unclear why a poem produced in this way should be less unified than any poem whose production requires more than one draft. Hegel may mean that a poem with a wholly prosaic, conceptual meaning that can be stated in non-poetic terms cannot be an aesthetic unity. But it is not clear why this should be so: in the absence of conceptual expression, 'pictorial ideas' etc. need not be superfluous or simply appended to the poem, but may be required for the expression of its meaning. See Knox, *LA*, 1, pp. 422–4 for Hegel's low opinion of didactic poetry.

3. *Phantasie*: here distinguished from *Einbildungskraft* ('imagination' below), in that 'fancy' is freely creative and 'productive', while 'imagination' depends on recollection of past experiences and is thus 'reproductive'. Cf. section VII, n. 1.

4. *geistreichen*: lit. 'rich in spirit', but with, like the French equivalent of *Geist* – *esprit* – more a suggestion of wit and liveliness than of the depth associated with *Geist*.

5. *Naturgabe*: in Hegel's usage, this, like *Talent* (from the Greek *talán-ton*, a 'balance', hence something weighed out or apportioned to one), is a capacity such that (i) few people possess it; (ii) though requiring cultivation, it cannot be acquired by the cultivation of capacities possessed by all or by many people; and (iii) its exercise involves the natural, i.e. sensory, aspects of a person, not simply his intellectual aspect.

6. Cf. Kant's *Critique of Judgement* [CJ] (1790), §47, which argues that the scientist as such cannot have genius (*Genie*). The arguments for this, and for Hegel's, view are of varying merit: (i) That thought is a 'universal capacity' presumably means that everyone has it; but not everyone has it to the same degree, and everyone (or everyone at least who can *appreciate* art) has 'fancy' to some degree, (ii) That fancy is natural or sensory, while thought is not, is not relevant, since e.g. science also involves 'fancy', (iii) That there is 'no specifically scientific talent in the sense of a mere natural endowment' is also irrelevant, since artistic talent too requires cultivation, (iv) Kant's claim (CJ, 1st edn., p. 19g) that science proceeds by 'clearly known rules' is false. But he makes a different and more plausible claim (§47): a scientist can in retrospect explain the steps by which he made his

discoveries, even to someone who could not have made them himself; but the artist often cannot explain, esp. to the non-artist, how he achieved his results, and does not know, at least in a prosaic or scientific sense, how he did it. This argument is implicit in Hegel's reference to fancy's 'instinct-like productiveness' and its 'unconscious operation' below.

7. This is also true of science, swimming, and many other activities.

8. Pace Knox, p. 41, n. 1, this claim does not contradict Hegel's claim in section XLV that an artist cannot produce satisfactory works in early youth. Talent or genius may reveal itself in works that do not do justice to it.

9. *Vorstellung*.

LX. 1. *Inhalt*: here it hovers between 'theme' and 'meaning'.

LXI. 1. *Zuoeck*: 'aim, purpose, end'. Hegel's question here, 'What is the purpose of the artist in producing art?' is similar to his earlier question, 'Why does the artist *need* to produce art?', but not identical to it. 'To imitate nature' (cf. LXII) is at least a possible answer to the purpose question, but as an answer to the need question it immediately invites the further question 'Why does he need to imitate nature?' The purpose question, but not the need question, can be answered in terms of the needs of, or prospective benefits to, the artist's audience (e.g. their moral improvement: cf. section LXX). Hence the proposed answers to the question 'What is the artist's purpose?' and Hegel's examination of them tend to turn on the supposed benefits to the audience of contemplating art rather than the benefits to the artist of producing it.

LXII. 1. 'General, abstract, as much applicable to one thing as to another' [B],

2. *Heuchelei*: lit. 'hypocrisy, dissimulation, pretence'.

3. *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile*, 3rd edn. (London, 1813), vol. vi, pp. 526 – 7, by James Bruce (1730-94).

4.A 'body of traditions incorporating the history of Mahomet's life and so... a sort of supplement to the Koran' (Knox, p. 42).

5. Cf. Pliny, *Natural History*, xxxv, 36.

6. Knox, pp. 42-3, attributes this story to Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840). Christian Wilhelm Biittner (1716-1801) was a professor at Göttingen. August Johann Rôsel von Rosenhof (1705-59) published *Insektbelustigungen* in parts between 1746 and 1755.

7. CJ, §42.

8. 'i.e. mere copying, devoting oneself to the one-sided purpose of making a thing over again, without putting any life or meaning into it' [B].

LXIII. 1. *des objektive Schone*: not the beauty of the object portrayed in contrast to the beauty of the portrayal, but the objective beauty of objects and portrayals of them in contrast to 'subjective taste'. Cf. n. 3 below.

2. 'Which says that the business of art is to imitate' [B],

3. It is unclear why a criterion of beauty (whether objective or subjective) is needed, if all that is required of art is accurate imitation. (Hegel believes – wrongly – that

accuracy of imitation is an objective matter, that an imitation that is correct for men is correct for birds and monkeys.) Hegel's argument is this:

(i) In principle the imitation-view requires no criterion of beauty, but in practice it needs some criterion for choosing from among the indefinitely many objects available for imitation those that are most worthy of it, and also perhaps an account of why imitation of *anything* is worthwhile.

(ii) The imitation-view is concerned only with the imitable outer appearances of things and with the mere appearance of works of art, not with their inner depth or meaning.

(iii) This excludes any criterion of objective beauty, since the surface beauty of things is a matter of subjective taste and varies from person to person, age to age, etc.

(iv) There is an objective beauty which is not a matter of randomly variable subjective taste, but this is inaccessible to imitation and to the imitation-view. Objective beauty belongs to art, not to nature or mere reproductions of it, since nature lacks the relevant depth.

Hegel's own *dominant* view is that the beauty of a work depends on the extent to which its sensory form and its content are in harmony. But he occasionally lapses into the view that it depends on the truth of the content: see section [CIII](#), n. 4.

[LXIV](#). 1. The 'truth' and 'probability' not of the imitation-view, but of imitative art itself. *Wahrscheinlichkeit* ('probability', from *wahrscheinlich*, 'probable') is literally 'truth-likeness, verisimilitude', formed from *wahr*, 'true', and *scheinen*, 'appear, etc' ('Truth' is *Wahrheit*.) Hegel's argument is this: Poetry cannot, like painting, fool the eye into

thinking that the objects and events it portrays are present, nor does it usually portray actual objects and events. The imitation-view can resort to the claim that poetry describes such objects and events as *might* exist, or might have existed, and is *üius trütii*-like. But, Hegel objects, poetry admits of inventions ('original imaginations') that cannot be plausibly supposed to portray actual objects and events.

2. *phantastischen Erdichtungen*: lit. 'fanciful inventions'. "Fantastic" means "odd or wild". Hegel only means "original", "creative" [B].

LXV. 1. *Nüancen*: 'Context seems to forbid referring it to colour. I suspect it of meaning character of outline' [B]

LXVI. 1. Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, 1. 1, 25: 'I am a man: I regard nothing human as alien to me.' Bosanquet silently corrects Hegel's inaccurate quotation: *nihil humani a me alienum puto*

2. *Anschauung und Vorstellung*.

3. *Zeichen*: lit. 'signs'. In the *Philosophy of Spirit*, §§457 – 8, Hegel distinguishes between a *Zeichen* and a *Symbol*, but nothing hangs on the distinction here. Cf. section [CXIV](#), n. 1.

LXVII. 1. *rÄsonnierende*: 'a term of disparagement in Hegel, applied to proofs, *pro* and *con*, which do not rest on a thorough conception of the fundamental nature of what is being discussed' [B]. Cf. n. 2 below.

2. *Räsonnement*: this can, in Hegel's view, justify a wide range of e.g. conduct by specious arguments: e.g. 'It is justifiable to promote one's own welfare; I can best promote my welfare by stealing this wallet; so it is justifiable to steal

this wallet.' A similar argument would show that stealing the wallet is not justifiable (e.g. 'It is not justifiable to break the law, etc.'). and *Râsonnement* supplies no criterion for preferring one argument to the other. Analogously, art can arouse both sympathy and disgust for e.g. adultery, Antigone, the French Revolution, etc.

3. ' "Formal" means here as usual, empty, or general; i.e. not taking account of varieties in the matter to which it is applied' [B].

4. After 'purpose', Bosanquet omits a sentence that runs: 'The need arises, both in the case of the concept of the political state and in the case of the concept of art, for an end or purpose which is common to the particular aspects [i.e. to the diverse material of art and to the capacities, etc. developed by the state], and which is a higher, *substantial* [i.e. not merely formal] end.' Hegel's argument is this: Just as *Râsonnement* justifies all manner of possibly conflicting conduct, so the state develops all manner of possibly conflicting capacities and tendencies. But unlike *Râsonnement*, the state has a single, substantial end (involved in its concept), which supplies an answer to the question 'What is the point of developing all these capacities, etc.?' and There by a principle for deciding how to allocate resources to the development of capacities, how to organize the capacities, and their possessors, in a single coherent, orderly system, etc. Similarly art requires a single, substantial end to answer the question 'What is the point of providing all these experiences and arousing all these emotions?'

Both analogies are questionable. *Râsonnement* defeats its own purpose as a guide to conduct, since it gives equally

compelling arguments for incompatible courses of conduct. But since art is not intended to guide our actions, its arousal of contrary emotions concerning the same object is not necessarily self-defeating. Again, it is not obvious that the whole body of works of art does or should form a single coherent system like a structured state, though Hegel sometimes speaks as if this were so. See section cxv, n. 7.

5. *Als ein solcher substantieller Zweck*: ‘As such a substantial end’.

LXVIII. This section contains Hegel’s response to a possible reply (cf. section **LXVII**, n. 4) to his argument in section **LXVII**, viz. the reply that the oppositions and contradictions of the emotions etc. aroused by art are innocuous, since the emotions are not seriously felt but distanced from us by art. (Section LXVI did not consider this view. Its suggestion that the illusions of art are as good as real experience implies that the emotions aroused by art are as genuine as those of real life.)

1. If I am e.g. angry, my anger is a particular, determinate state, while I as such am ‘universal’, since I as such am wholly indeterminate (e.g. I can be calm or angry, etc. while still remaining *me*) and do not differ qualitatively from other individuals (or ‘i’s’) as such. But I may be so consumed by my anger that I am unable to distinguish or distance myself from it, and thus unable to think ‘I should restrain my anger’ or even ‘I am angry’.

2. If, in my anger, I think, ‘This anger is stronger than me’, it is not obvious that ‘I as universal’ am ‘one with’ my anger, since I am ‘aware of myself as universal’ and have a ‘will outside’ my anger. But my will is insufficient to restrain the

anger, if the anger is really stronger than me: the anger may be comparable to a physical weight from which I can distinguish myself, but which I cannot remove. Hegel's belief that critical awareness of a passion inevitably enables one to restrain it is unjustified.

3. In the discussion that follows Hegel conflates two distinct claims: (i) The objective portrayal of one's passions etc. makes one aware of them and thus distances and liberates one from them, (ii) One's own external expression of one's passions tends to relieve them. To observe a portrayal of anger is not to express one's anger. Conversely, expression of one's grief or anger need not induce reflection on it. But see n. 4.

4. This accounts for the confusion noted in n. 3. The artist often both expresses his passion in art and becomes reflectively aware of it in art. But the natural expressions of passions usually do not have this effect. The natural expression of grief may *relieve* the grief, but the natural expression of e.g. avarice does not even do this.

5. *theoretisch*: 'I have no doubt that it has here the meaning of *theorem* [Greek: "to contemplate, etc."] without a trace of allusion to "theory". It is opposed to "destructive", or "appetitive" [B].

6. Hegel opposes Rousseauesque admiration for nature and the natural man. Art elevates man above the natural in two stages: (i) by inducing a contemplative, rather than an impassioned, appetitive or engaged 'attention' to sensory representations; (ii) by directing attention from sensory *Schein* to its 'significance' or meaning (*Bedeutung*).

LXIX. 1. The 'purification' and 'moral perfecting' of the passions

is distinguished from bridling their savagery and educating them – the theme of section [LXVIII](#). The latter is ‘abstract and general’, the former is ‘determinate’ and an ‘essential end of this education’, i.e. answers the question ‘What is the point of educating our passions and what sort of education should we give them?’

2. i.e. it is also ‘abstract and general’.

3. This seems to mean that the ‘purifying content’ in its ‘universality and essentiality’ must be brought before the consciousness of the audience of art, rather than before the consciousness of the proponent of the purification doctrine or that of the artist. If e.g. a serene statue of Apollo is to purify my passions, it must convey a general moral message to me, not simply a message about Apollo.

4. ‘The moral’ [B].

5. ‘Person, i.e. here, audience or spectator’ [B].

6. Horace, *Ars Poética*, 333.

7. “‘Contingent’ means, not so much “what may or may not exist”, as the trivial, which makes no difference whether it exists or not’ [B]. This is questionable. Earlier in the sentence ‘contingent’ means ‘incidental, peripheral (viz. to the nature of art)’. (An aim or effect that is incidental to the nature of art need not be intrinsically trivial.) Here in its second occurrence ‘contingent’ should have a different force, if Hegel is to be saved from tautology; but it is not clear that it does.

8. Hegel begins with a general specification of the aim of art, regardless of whether the aim is, or is to be realized by, teaching. The aim must be ‘universal and not contingent’,

i.e. it must not depend on the particular features of only some works of art or be extrinsic to the nature of art (e.g. making money for the artist). Since art is essentially 'spiritual', its universal and non-contingent aim must be spiritual. The argument is open to at least two objections:

(i) Hegel's use of 'spiritual' is excessively vague, but even so, the claim that if art is spiritual, then its non-contingent aim is spiritual seems unsound: a knife is 'spiritual' in the sense that it is produced by the mind, as well as by the hand, but its aim is not spiritual in the sense that it is designed to affect the mind rather than bodies.

(ii) Art is sensory as well as spiritual. Why should it not have, like ordinary wallpaper, a purely sensory function? Hegel's belief that the sensory features of art are 'individual' rather than universal (see n. 13 below) does not exclude this: the sensory features of art, though differing from work to work, may nevertheless have a general function. More relevant is the argument that since art is both sensory and spiritual, while natural objects are sensory and can appeal to the senses as well as art can, a purely sensory function would not be peculiar to art or call into play all its essential features.

9. Hegel now turns to the view that the aim of art is to teach, and argues that if this is to satisfy the general specification of the aim of art (cf. n. 8 above), art must convey *an und für sich wesentlichen geistigen Gehalt*: lit. 'spiritual content [i.e. meaning] that is essential in and for itself. (Bosanquet's 'really and explicitly significant, etc' is misleading, in that it makes Hegel say that, on the view in question, art must be explicitly didactic. But this issue is not raised until the next paragraph.)

10. This sentence makes two distinct points: (i) the higher art is, the more it has such a content (*Inhalt*), i.e. meaning, (ii) The essence of the content supplies a criterion or standard for the appropriateness of what is expressed (*das Ausgedruckte*). If (ii) is to be saved from tautology, 'what is expressed' should be different from the 'content', and is probably the theme, together with the way in which it is treated. Thus (ii) means that the meaning of a work determines whether its theme is appropriately chosen and treated. It follows that 'content' is not the sole criterion of artistic merit, as (i) implies: a work of art is to be assessed not only by its meaning, but by the suitability of its theme and treatment of it to that meaning.

11. Hegel here endorses the view that the aim of art is to teach, but he qualifies his endorsement in the next paragraph.

12. *in ihm selbst gebrochenes*: lit. 'internally broken up'. 'I do not suppose there is an allusion to the [biblical] words I use' [B].

13. The sensory features of art are individual in the sense that it is they, rather than the spiritual meaning, that differentiate works, and objects portrayed, from each other. The universal, spiritual meaning is embodied in an individualized, sensory product. Cf. n. 8 above.

14. If art simply adorns an intrinsically unaesthetic message, it is merely a means for the propagation of a message which can be propagated in other ways, e.g. by textbooks.

15. Hegel seems to hold that if art is a 'mere toy of entertainment', it is not an 'end on its own merits [*für sich*]',

for the reason that entertainment is too trivial to be an end, rather than because we have other ways of entertaining ourselves. But he may mean that the boundary between regarding art as an end and regarding it as a means lies between the entertainment-view and the instruction-view, thus presenting a dilemma: if art is entertainment, it is an end in itself, but trivial; while if art didactically instructs, it is significant, but merely a means.

LXX. 1. Hegel means not so much that the boundary becomes sharp, but rather that it becomes clear that we have overstepped it, i.e. are regarding art as a means to a further end. Almost any answer to the question ‘What is the point of instruction and of purifying the passions?’ will have this effect, not only an answer in terms of moral improvement. The aim proposed will be even further removed from the sensory features of art than are the instruction and purification themselves.

LXXI. 1. *Sittlichkeit*: ‘almost = morality in the English sense. It means the habit of virtue, without the reflective aspiration after goodness as an ideal’ [B], Hegel stresses the derivation of the word, and of the adjective *sittlich*, from *Sitte*, ‘custom’. Hence he gives it the flavour of ‘(conformity, conforming to) customary morality’. Other translations are ‘ethical (life)’, ‘social morality’, ‘conventional life’ (Knox, p. 52). None of these renditions is wholly adequate, e.g. ‘respectability’ and ‘conventional life’ carry a suggestion of low-key and mindless conformity that is not always present in Hegel’s use of the word.

2. ‘*Moralität* almost = conscientiousness or scrupulosity. The above sentence is hardly true with the English word

“moral” [B]. Hegel’s account of *Moralität* is based on his interpretation of Kant. For an assessment of Hegel’s interpretation and criticisms of Kant’s moral theory, see A. W. Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (Cambridge, 1990).

3. *für sich*: this ‘is often used where there is no notion of development, and seems very like *an sich*’ [B].

4. *Gegensatz*: here ‘antithesis’ in the sense of ‘opposition’ rather than ‘opposite’.

5. ‘As e.g. if we suppose that an act done at the bidding of natural affection cannot also be a fulfilment of the command of duty. The “reconciliation” [*Vermittlung*, lit. “mediation”] would be in supposing the natural affection, e.g. for parents, to operate as a moral motive, being transformed by a recognition of its sacred or spiritual character’ [B].

LXXII. 1. i.e. we became conscious of this opposition not only in moral action, but in other areas too.

2. The contrast between what is ‘real essentially and in its own right’ (*an und für sich*) and what is ‘external reality and existence [*Dasein*],’ is roughly the contrast between e.g. a book in the abstract and the (possibly misprinted) copies of it or between a play and (more or less inadequate) performances of it.

3. In each of the antitheses Hegel mentions, the first term is in some sense universal (*allgemein*), while the second is particular (*besonder*). Thus the antithesis of the universal and the particular is ‘abstract’, since it is the framework common to, and in different ways filled in by, the ‘concrete’ antitheses. The universal here is also ‘abstract’ in another way: since it is here distinct from, and contrasts with, the particular, it is an abstract universal. A concrete universal is

one (e.g. duty) that has undergone the ‘reconciliation’ with the particular (e.g. affection) discussed in section [LXXI](#), n. 5.

[LXXIII](#). **1. Bildung:** ‘culture, education, etc’ Like Schiller, esp. in his *Aesthetic Letters* (cf. section [LXXXIV](#), n. 3), Hegel believes that culture essentially involves opposition and alienation, e.g. it involves opposition between our reason and our desires, between different social classes, different professions, branches of knowledge, etc.

2. Verstand: Hegel contrasts this, the analytical faculty responsible for sharp, clear-cut distinctions etc., with *Vernunft* ‘reason’, the faculty responsible for repairing the oppositions set up by *Verstand*.

3. Bestimmungen; lit. ‘determinations’, here e.g. ‘prescriptions’.

4. i.e. ‘set (up)on’.

5. Hegel does not use ‘true’ (*wahr*) and ‘truth’ (*das Wahre, the Wahrheit*) primarily of propositions or sentences. He sometimes compares his use of ‘true’ to its use in ‘a true [i.e. real, proper] artist, painting, etc’ In this section ‘truth’ is close to ‘the essence, heart, of the matter’, but it also has the flavour of ‘satisfaction’ what is true is intellectually, ontologically, morally, etc. satisfying or up to scratch. But truth is, for Hegel, objective, and not simply a matter of how I (or we) feel about things.

6. Philosophy does not resolve, or need to resolve, the antithesis. ‘Natural faith and will’, i.e. ordinary, unreflective religious faith and morality (*Sittlichkeit*, not *Moralität*) mediate or reconcile it by e.g. spiritualizing, or recognizing the spiritual character of, our natural affections (see section [LXXI](#), n. 5). Philosophy is confined to analyzing the

antithesis, showing that it requires a solution, and showing that 'natural faith and will' provide this solution. (See also the Preface to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. But he does not invariably assign philosophy such a modest role.)

7. Both limbs of the antithesis are preserved in their reconciliation. In the vocabulary Hegel uses elsewhere (but not in this sentence) they are 'sublated' (*aufgehoben*) Cf. section [CXIII](#), n. a.

[LXXIV](#). 1. Literally translated, this sentence runs: 'Now since the ultimate aim, moral improvement, pointed to a higher standpoint, we must vindicate this higher standpoint for art too.' The argument is this: The consideration of moral (*moralische*) improvement as the end of art led to a higher standpoint beyond that of morality, viz. the reconciliation of the antithesis presupposed by *Moralitat* and of other, similar antitheses. Having argued that in the ethical sphere *Moralitat* needs to be (shown to have been) superseded by *Sittlichkeit* (the ethical embodiment of the higher standpoint), we now need to apply this higher standpoint to art.

2. Hegel gives two, *prima facie* distinct, reasons for rejecting the moral view of art: (i) the higher standpoint implies the supersession of morality; (ii) on the moral view of art, art would have an end distinct from itself. It is not clear how these two reasons are related. One might suppose that the distinction between end and means involved in the moral view itself exemplifies the type of antithesis that is overcome by the higher standpoint. But even in Hegel's view, some things (e.g. knives, medicine) are merely means to an end. Why should art not be of this type? Again, granted that morality is unsatisfactorily antithetical, why should this make it an end external to or 'outside' art, more

so, that is, than any other suggested answer to the question 'What is the end of art?'

Hegel's argument is this: Since morality is engaged in opposition to the passions etc., it is essentially something that is not yet fully realized, but is to be striven for and 'ought' to be; it is the 'moral end of the world'. Art may help to promote morality, but morality will remain external to and independent of the work of art, esp. since the work of art is present now, while morality will be realized only in the future. On the higher standpoint, by contrast, the ethical reconciliation of opposition – *Sittlichkeit*, – is not a future goal nor does it require promotion from outside: it is 'always self-accomplishing' (see section [LXXIII](#), n. 6), while a reconciliation that required promotion from outside would not be a real reconciliation, since the opposites would not be *self* dissolving. Thus *Sittlichkeit*, and reconciliation generally, cannot be the end of art in the way that health is the end of medicine, or morality the end of preaching. If it figures in the aim of art, it does so not as a future goal to be promoted and thus quite distinct from art itself, but as contemporaneous with art and not in need of promotion by art.

3. Hegel ascribes two characteristics to an end that is external to art and to which art is a means: (i) it is essential, i.e. it is what (in contrast to art, the means to it) really matters, and matters 'outside the sphere of art' (ii) it is not yet realized but 'ought to be'. But these characteristics are separable, in that something may have (i) while lacking (ii). Thus *Moralität* has both (i) and (ii), but *Sittlichkeit* may have only (i). If something, e.g. *Sittlichkeit*, lacks (ii), it cannot be the job of art to produce it. But it may nevertheless be the job of art to sustain, express or reveal it, and if so, what is

sustained, expressed or revealed may be ‘essential... outside the sphere of art’, even though contemporaneous with art, thus reducing art to a means. Hegel may, however, be thinking of art and *Sittlichkeit*, esp. in ancient Greece, as so closely interwoven that neither can be regarded as a means to the other.

4. This sentence raises two problems:

(1) The aim of art is described in two ways, as (i) ‘revealing the truth [*die Wahrheit*] in the form of artistic sensuous shape’ and (ii) ‘representing the reconciled antithesis’. Why does Hegel suppose that these amount to the same thing? Why might an artist not reveal (an aspect of) the truth by representing antithesis unreconciled, e.g. the conflict and disorder of his own age, the rift between our ideals and the world as it is, etc.? The ambiguity of ‘the truth’ may play a part here. In (i) it is naturally taken to mean ‘what is held at a given time to be the truth about the world’ – which could be antithesis, rather than reconciliation. But in section [LXXII](#) the truth, in the sense of the ‘essence of the matter’ or ‘what is ultimately satisfying’, is said to be the reconciliation of antithesis: see [LXXII](#), n. 4. But a more important factor is this: Art essentially harmonizes its sensory form and its spiritual content (esp. its meaning). Thus art exemplifies the reconciliation of at least one antithesis, viz. that between the sensory surface of the world and its essential nature. In doing this, art implicitly affirms that antitheses are reconciled, that e.g. the world and the ideal are in harmony. By its very harmony of form and content, art conveys a certain content, viz. reconciliation. Thus art that attempts to represent antithesis unreconciled either refutes itself (like the sentence ‘No words adequately express their meaning’) or is, like pre-Greek or

modern Romantic art, less than fully adequate art. (See Chapter V below.)

(2) Why does Hegel suppose that the aim of art, as described in (i) and (ii) above, is internal to art, not extrinsic to it? His reason is this: Some things (e.g. knives, medicine) have the aim of producing a future result (e.g. cuts, health) by their productive activity (e.g. cutting, healing). The end (cuts, health), when it has been produced, exists independently of, and is detectable and valuable independently of, the means of its production (knives and cutting, medicine and healing). It can usually be produced by alternative means (e.g. scissors, exercise). If art were like this it too would produce an independent end (e.g. moral virtue) by its activity (e.g. improving, instructing, purifying). If, on the other hand, an entity (e.g. art, ears) does not produce anything, but rather reveals something (e.g. truth or reconciliation, sounds) by its activity or quasi-activity (e.g. revealing or representing, hearing), there are important differences from the first case: What is revealed (truth, sounds) is usually contemporaneous with the entity (art, ears) and the activity (representing, hearing) that reveal it. It is not detectable, or therefore valuable, independently of the entity and activity that reveal it. Conceivably, one might also argue that it does not exist independently of its revelation, e.g. that sounds are only fully sounds when heard or that the truth is only fully actualized when revealed. (Aristotle held this view of sounds, and Hegel holds this view of the truth, i.e. God: see section [XLVII](#), n. 2.)

This still leaves open, however, whether what is revealed by art or by ears could be revealed by something else, e.g. by philosophy or by eyes. The answer to this depends on

how what is revealed is described. If what ears reveal is sounds, then only ears can reveal it. If what ears reveal is objects or the world, then eyes can reveal it too. Similarly, if art reveals the truth 'in the form of sensuous artistic shape', then only art can reveal it. But if art reveals simply the truth, then philosophy may well reveal it too. It does not follow from the fact that ears and eyes reveal, at some level of generality, the same thing, that ears are dispensable in favour of eyes. Similarly, art may not be dispensable, even if at bottom it reveals the same thing as philosophy. We may value e.g. art's peculiar way of revealing it. It is less likely that our evaluation of an end-product (cuts, health, morality) will depend on the manner of its production.

5. Begriff. Hegel's argument, as interpreted in n. 4 above, is not directly related to the question whether the aim suggested for a thing is implicit in our concept of it or not. That art makes money for the artist is not involved in our (ordinary) concept of art; but nor is the fact that it represents reconciliation. Conversely, it is implicit in the concept of a knife that it cuts things and in that of medicine that it produces health.

LXXV. **1. Reflexionsbetrachtung.** *Reflexion* is associated with opposites that are sharply separated both from each other and from the subject who reflects upon them. The 'point of view' into which it resolves itself is that of reconciliation.

2. Begriff.

3. Reflexionsbildung.

4. Begriff.

5. In section XVII, Hegel attributed the modern decline of art in part to 'reflective culture' (*Reflexionsbildung*), and in

XVIII he implied that this very reflectiveness gives rise to philosophy of art. In LXXV, by contrast, the overcoming of reflective antithesis or opposition is said to favour philosophy and aesthetics, but not, as we might expect, the revival of art itself. The solution to this apparent inconsistency is that, in Hegel's view, there are not only two stages, reflective antithesis and reconciliation, but three:

(i) The naive, pre-reflective unity of opposites, in which e.g. the conceptual is not disentangled from the sensory. No reconciliation is needed here, since no initial opposition has yet occurred. (I ignore the complex, but non-philosophical, process by which, in Hegel's view, the Greeks overcame the still more primitive antitheses characteristic of their oriental predecessors.) According to XVII this prevailed in ancient Greece and the Middle Ages. It favoured art, but not philosophy of art.

(ii) The reflective culture of modern times, which not only disentangles the conceptual from the sensory, but gives rise within philosophy to such intractable antitheses as those between the actual and the ideal, thought and sensation, etc. This is detrimental to art, but favours reflection on art (XVIII). It does not, however, enable us fully to appreciate the art characteristic of stage (i), or the essential nature of art: it encourages us e.g. to regard art as a means to an end.

(iii) Philosophy overcomes within itself the antitheses of stage (ii), and shows how they are continually overcome in actual life (LXXIII, esp. n. 6). This favours philosophy of art and aesthetics: e.g. it enables us to appreciate the art of stage (i) and to see that art is not a means to an end. But it does not restore the naïve, pre-reflective unity of (i): philosophy presupposes a distinction between the conceptual

and the sensory, since it is itself conceptual rather than sensory in form, and it acknowledges our continuing tendency to think conceptually rather than, exclusively or primarily, in pictorial imagery. Thus there is no reason to suppose that stage (iii) will favour art in the way that stage (i) did. But equally Hegel gives no conclusive reason here for supposing that it will be as unfavourable to art as stage (ii) was.

LXXVI. 1. *Begriff*.

2. *Standpunkte*: lit. ‘standpoints’.

3. *Mitte(n)*: lit. ‘middle(s), mid-point(s)’, not *Mitteln*, ‘means (in contrast to “ends”)’.

Hegel is thus not revoking his denial that art is a means to an end.

LXXVII. Sections LXXVII–LXXXI summarize Kant’s doctrines, mainly in Hegel’s own vocabulary and with some licence. For other accounts of Kant by Hegel, see his *Logic (Encyclopaedia, 1)*, §§40-60, esp. 55-9 on the *Critique of Judgement*, and his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, tr. E. S. Haldane and F. Simson (London, 1892-6), vol. m, pp. 423-78, esp. 464ff. The essays in *Hegel’s Critique of Kant*, ed. S. Priest (Oxford, 1987), assess Hegel’s interpretation and criticisms of the whole range of Kant’s thought, including his aesthetics.

1. *Vorstellung*.

2. Primarily in the *Critique of Pure Reason* [CPR] (1781, 1787).

3. Primarily in the *Critique of Practical Reason* [CPrR] (1788).

4. This is the self-aware, rational I or ego, the locus, in

CPR, of categories (such as causality) which enable it to unify sensory intuitions into a world of experienceable objects, and, in *CPrR*, rationally based categorical (i.e. moral) imperatives which both guide its conduct in the world of phenomenal objects and enable it to transcend that world, and its causal influence, into a realm of freedom. The ego is 'infinite' in Hegel's sense: not in the sense that it goes on for ever, nor primarily in the sense that it is wholly self-enclosed and not dependent on other things for its existence or its self-knowledge, but in the sense that it can return or withdraw into itself out of its cognitive and practical dealings with phenomenal entities, and become self-aware and 'self-related'. It corresponds to the 'abstract self-concentrated mind' of section LXXVI.

5. *CPR* involves two antitheses to which Hegel objects: (i) between what the ego contributes (viz. categories and the forms of sensibility, space and time) and the sensory intuitions presented to it; and (ii) between appearances or phenomena (i.e. the joint product of the ego's activity and sensory intuitions) and things as they are 'in themselves', independently of the ego's activity. Things in themselves are, in Kant's view, unknowable to us. Here Hegel mainly has the second antithesis in mind. But the first corresponds more closely to the antithesis between 'self-concentrated mind and actual nature' of section LXXVI.

6. This antithesis, esp. in *CPrR*, is between the will as such and its moral imperatives, on the one hand, and, on the other, our sensuous desires, etc. Our desires represent 'individuality' both because they do not take the form of general rules or principles and because, unlike the will as such, they vary from person to person. This antithesis corresponds more closely to (i) than to (ii) in n. 5 above,

since our desires, unlike the things-in-themselves, lie within the phenomenal realm. Hegel is attempting to assimilate a variety of antitheses to a single pattern.

7. See section LXXI, esp. n. 2.

8. In *CPR* the ideas (*Ideen*) of reason (*Vernunft*), esp. those of God and of the world as a whole, repair the antitheses referred to in n. 5 above: (i) they involve no antithesis between the concept and the sensory material, since the very concept of e.g. God guarantees his existence (or, rather, would guarantee it, if he *did* exist); and (ii) their objects are (or, rather, would be if they existed) things-in-themselves, not things as structured by our conceptual and sensory equipment. But in Kant's view, such ideas are merely 'subjective', in that we cannot know whether anything corresponds to them or not.

9. In *CPrR*, Kant argues that certain doctrines, esp. that the ideas (*Ideen*) of freedom, God and immortality are realized, are justifiable not by theoretical reason, but as postulates of practical reason. The postulates can be understood and accepted only in so far as they are required by the moral view of the world. We must suppose e.g. that we are immortal, if we are to find reasonable the moral requirement to perfect ourselves morally and wholly to subject our desires to reason, and we must suppose that God exists if we are to regard as feasible the final goal of morality, the highest good, viz. the attainment of happiness in proportion to our moral worth. Moral perfection and the final good can, in Kant's view, be attained only at infinity (as by counting '1, 1/2, 1/4, etc.' we reach 'o' at infinity). It is thus primarily the idea of the good whose accomplishment is 'deferred to infinity'. But since the ideas of God etc. are to

be understood only in terms of their moral function, the deferral affects them too.

10. An intuitive understanding (*intuitiver Verstand*) is, in Kant's view, an understanding which supplies not only, like our own understanding, concepts or categories, but also the (in this case, non-sensory) intuitions required to guarantee the existence of an object corresponding to a concept. It thus bridges the gap between 'concept and reality' etc. since, for an intuitive understanding, thinking a concept would guarantee its instantiation. Kant thus 'points to the Idea [*Idee*]', which, in Hegel's view (and also, in a sense, in Kant's) is the unity of the concept and its reality (see section xxxvi, n. 5). But although Kant finds the concept of an intuitive understanding non-contradictory and therefore possible in principle, he does not believe that we have such an understanding or that we can know that any other being (esp. God) does. Thus Kant 'comes to a standstill in the contradiction of subjectivity and objectivity'. (Hegel perhaps feels – mistakenly – that it is contradictory to suppose that the concept of an understanding, whose own possession of concepts secures their instantiation, does not secure its own instantiation.)

11. Kant deals with the intuitive understanding not only in *CPR*, but esp. in his *Kritik der Urteilkraft* (1790), §77. *Urteilkraft* is literally the 'power of judgement', but the title of this work is more usually translated as the *Critique of Judgement* [*CJ*]. Part I of *CJ* presents Kant's views on aesthetics. But in the Introduction and in Part II, he argues that nature, with its coherent, systematic body of laws that are perfectly adapted to our cognitive powers, and also living organisms, must be viewed *as if* they had been created by an (intuitive) understanding, though we are not entitled

to infer that they were so created. Here again, in Hegel's view, Kant 'comes to a standstill, etc.'

12. teleologische: 'pertaining to purpose(s)', from the Greek *telos*, 'end, purpose'.

13. zweckmässige: lit. 'purposive' (from *Zweck*, 'purpose'), by which Kant (and Hegel) means not 'serving some extrinsic purpose', but 'so internally adapted, with parts or organs serving reciprocally as both ends and means [e.g. the heart and the brain keep each other operating], that they seem as if they were purposively designed'.

14. In *CJ*, Introduction, IV, from which these quotations come, Kant argues as follows: All judgement is the 'power of thinking the particular as contained under the universal'. But judgement is of two types: (i) In determining (*bestimmende*) judgement, the universal is given, and the task is to find, or (at a more fundamental level) to manufacture from our sensory intuitions, an object corresponding to it. (ii) By contrast, reflective (*reflektierende*) judgement 'has only the particular given to it, and has to find the universal under which it comes'. The most general laws of nature (e.g. that every event has a cause) are, in Kant's view, imposed on it by our understanding and are applied to particular objects and events by the 'determining judgement under transcendental laws' (i.e. the a priori laws so imposed). Only in this way can we have objective experience of nature. But the particular empirical laws that exemplify these very general laws are not imposed by our understanding or our determining judgement. Many alternative possible systems of empirical laws would satisfy the general requirements of our understanding and of objective experience. But the actual system is, in Kant's view, especially well suited to our

cognitive powers. Reflective judgement is needed, then, to account for this. And it does so by regarding nature, or those aspects of nature that are left undetermined by our understanding, as if it had been produced by an (intuitive and divine) understanding for the benefit of our cognition.

If an understanding produces an object in accordance with its concept of the object, the concept is a purpose. E.g. if a watchmaker makes a watch in accordance with his concept of a watch, or of the type of watch he intends to produce, his concept is his purpose. The watch is a purposive object, not simply serving some further purpose, but such that its parts interact in a purposive way that is to be explained primarily in terms of the maker's concept of the whole watch, rather than in terms of the properties of the separate parts. The watchmaker is not, however, an intuitive understanding, since he requires raw materials, in order to realize his purpose. Moreover, the watch can be judged to have been *actually* produced by a purpose, not merely to be *as if* it were such. Nature, in Kant's view, is to be judged as if it had been produced by an intuitive understanding, one whose mere purpose or concept secured the existence of its object, without any need of raw materials.

At a lower level, particular entities within nature, whose existence and workings cannot be adequately explained in terms of either the a priori laws of nature or its empirical laws – living organisms – are also to be viewed as if produced by an understanding: the emergence and structure of e.g. a plant can, like those of a watch, only be explained in terms of its overall concept, and since a plant, unlike a watch, develops with relatively little external guidance and absorbs and transforms the raw materials that it requires, it is tempting to suppose that the concept is primarily, if not

exclusively, responsible for its growth and structure, i.e. that here too it is *as if* an intuitive understanding were, at work.

15. *Begriff*. the general concept of e.g. a rose or a fox determines the 'particular', the details of its growth and structure. (But some details will depend on external circumstances.)

16. The supposition of reflective judgement that the organism is determined by its concept, purposive and the product of an intuitive understanding, is not objective, as it would be if the judgement were determining. (Kant's determining judgement is not, in Hegel's view, fully objective: it gives us no access to things-in-themselves. But it is objective to a higher degree than reflective judgement.)

17. The ideological judgement and the aesthetic judgement (esp. a judgement to the effect that something is beautiful) are similar in that both span the gap between the conceptual and the intuitive or sensory. The teleological judgement postulates that the concept or universal 'contains' and generates the particular or sensory features of the organism; the aesthetic judgement (which is also a species of reflective judgement) stems from the free play of the understanding and the (quasi-sensory) imagination (*Einbildungskraft*), not from the understanding *qua* faculty of 'ideas' (*Begriffe*) *as such* or from sensuous 'perception' (*Anschauung*) *as such*. 'As such' here does not mean 'alone' a non-aesthetic judgement, e.g. that something is a fox or brown, does not, in Kant's view, stem from either of these faculties *alone*. The point is rather that understanding and intuition do not, in aesthetic judgements, do their usual cognitive work of applying concepts and supplying information, but are in 'free play'. (See *CJ* §9, etc.)

LXXVIII. 1. *Bestimmung*: lit. ‘determination’, i.e. a state (of the subject, in contrast to the object).

2. After ‘independent’, Bosanquet omits a clause. The whole sentence should run: ‘The aesthetic judgement allows the external existence to subsist free and independent, and proceeds from a pleasure with which the object on its own account accords, since it [*sie*, i.e. the pleasure, not the judgement] gives licence to the object to have its end in itself.’ (Cf. *CJ*, §2.)

3. See section LVI.

LXXIX. 1. *CJ*, §6.

2. If I judge something to be beautiful, I commit myself to claiming not that everything relevantly similar (or falling under the same *Begriff*) is beautiful or that everyone else delights in it and judges it to be beautiful, but that everyone should delight in it and judge it to be beautiful. This coheres with the exclusion of interest (i.e. of what differentiates one person from another) from aesthetic judgement.

3. The force of this sentence is obscure. Hegel may mean: ‘Universal approval of something does not show that it deserves such approval, i.e. really is beautiful, true or good; but if something really is true, good or beautiful, then it deserves universal approval.’ If so, then he seems to miss the distinction between (i) ‘Aesthetic approval of an object, simply in virtue of being aesthetic approval (in contrast to e.g. a preference for tea over coffee), implicitly claims that others ought to approve of it too’ and (ii) ‘If one’s aesthetic approval of an object is justified, i.e. if the object really is beautiful, then others ought to approve of it too.’

Correspondingly, it is unclear whether his reason, in the preceding sentence, for denying aesthetic judgement to the 'natural' person is that such a person is too uncultivated to make judgements that (i) carry an implicit claim to universal acceptance or (ii) in fact deserve universal acceptance. If Hegel misreads Kant, this stems in part from the fact that he believes that beauty is objective, independent of our approvals and disapprovals, while Kant does not. Hence Hegel, unlike Kant, is tempted to draw a distinction between a claim to universal acceptance and a *justifiable* claim to universal acceptance.

4. e.g. an action is right in virtue of being e.g. the repayment of a debt, where the concept of repaying a debt is a 'universal conception' that applies to indefinitely many actions. A flower or a statue, by contrast, is not (judged to be) beautiful in virtue of possessing some general characteristic that it shares with other objects.

5. Hegel here conflates Kant's view (as in n. 4 above) with his own view, that e.g. a statue (but not a flower) is beautiful in virtue of embodying a conceptual meaning which cannot be extricated from its sensory expression. Kant locates the beauty of an object in (our judgements of) its sensory form, not in any deep meaning that it may possess.

LXXX. 1. *Zweckmässigkeit*: lit. 'conformity to purpose, purposiveness, teleology'.

2. See *CJ*, end of §17.

3. Since the 'idea [*Vorstellung*] of an end' would be, or involve, a concept (ion) distinct from the beautiful object.

4. 'i.e. in any means which we adopt in order to effect an end which we have distinctly before us as an idea. A knife

does not include cutting, nor a spade digging, although their construction is relative to these ends. But a man does include living, i.e. he is not a man if he ceases to live' [B]. 'Finite teleology' contrasts with 'infinite [i.e. self-enclosed, self-contained] teleology'. Hegel has in mind two types of finite teleology: (i) an object (the end), e.g. a pot, watch or knife, manufactured from raw materials (the means), e.g. clay, steel, etc.; and (ii) an object (the means), e.g. a knife, pot, watch, used for an end, e.g. cutting. Bosanquet stresses that, unlike a living organism, an item of type (ii) need not actually be fulfilling its end. (By contrast, Knox, p. 59, stresses that what fulfils the end of e.g. cutting need not be a knife, but e.g. a razor. But this point is hard to handle: flowers, as well as men, can live; it is true that only living organisms can live, but then only cutting implements can cut.) Hegel may also have in mind that, unlike the life of an organism, the cuts produced by a knife outlast the activity (cutting) and may outlast the object (knife) that produced them. Thus the three terms involved in (ii) – e.g. knife, cutting, cuts – are less intimately connected than the three parallel terms involved in a living organism: organism, living, life. With regard to (i), a watch can be made from different materials (e.g. gold, steel) and its constituent materials and parts can survive its dismantling; an organism of a certain type can only consist of flesh etc. and its parts do not outlast (or pre-exist) the organism.

5. Unlike the parts of a watch. In the German text (*'Der zweck der Glieder, z.B. des Organismus, usw'* lit. 'The purpose of the limbs e.g. of the organism, etc.') this point is not so obviously intended as an illustration of the teleology of the beautiful as Bosanquet's rendering implies. The reversion from beauty to organisms is nevertheless odd. Hegel is more

at ease with the teleology of life than with the teleology of beauty, in part because he gives the latter a sense quite different from that intended by Kant. See n. 6 below.

6. The German does not mention Kant here, but simply says ‘*woil das Schöne*’ etc., ambiguously ‘the beautiful should, ought, etc’ and ‘the beautiful is said, supposed [i.e. by Kant]’. At all events, Kant does not maintain what Hegel says here. The purposiveness of a beautiful object concerns, in Kant’s view, its surface features and their relationship to our cognitive faculties: the object is *as if* it were designed for the playful exercise of our faculties (e.g. CJ§58). In Hegel’s view, by contrast, a work of art is intrinsically and objectively (and infinitely) purposive, in the way that (in Hegel’s view) a living organism is. Just as the ‘inner’ life or vitality of an organism permeates, and manifests itself in, its ‘outer’ limbs etc., so the ‘inner’ content of the work (its theme or meaning) manifests itself in its ‘outer’ sensory form. The inner (or its expression) may be conceived as the end, and the outer as the means of its expression. But the two are inextricably intertwined: the inner content of a true work of art could only be expressed in the sensory form given to it by that work, and conversely *that* sensory form could only express *that* content.

[LXXXI](#). 1. See CJ, end of §22.

2. This could mean (i) ‘Necessarily, anything that is a cause has some effect’ or (ii) ‘A particular event, or type of event – e.g. heat-(ing) – necessitates a particular effect, or type of effect – e.g. melting.’ The truth of (i) depends on the concepts of a cause and of an effect, while that of (ii) does not. It is not wholly clear that Hegel distinguishes them, but he seems to have primarily (i) in mind. See n. 3 below.

3. This means not that the truth of the proposition 'Beauty involves delight' does not depend on the concepts of beauty and/or of delight, but that a beautiful object induces delight immediately, not in virtue of exemplifying a general concept, e.g. that of a waterfall. This contrasts beauty with causality, not in respect of claim (i) in n. 2 above, but in respect of claim (ii), since a particular event, or type of event, has a certain (type of) effect (e.g. melting) in virtue of its exemplifying a general concept (e.g. of heating).

4. Symmetry or regularity is an apparent exception to Kant's claim, since it pleases us and yet is generated in accordance with a concept. Kant's reply is that symmetry alone is not especially beautiful.

LXXXII. 1. Cf. *CJ*, §§44f. Hegel's argument is: beauty in general (of nature as well as art) involves the non-severance of universal and particular, etc.; in art this involves that the particular conforms to the concept(ion). Unlike Kant, Hegel has in mind the quasi-conceptual meaning or theme that the artist attempts to embody in a sensory form (the particular).

2. *Freiheitsbegriff*: I have replaced Bosanquet's 'feeling' with 'freedom'.

3. What sensations or feelings we have does not depend *either* on other sensations or feelings *or* e.g. on the universal principle that every event has a cause or on the moral law. Sensations are 'subsumed' under the category of causality and our feelings are 'controlled' by the moral law. But even so, the sensations and feelings are not fully determined by the category or the law. We can always distinguish the general principle from the contingent details of its specification. E.g. I must repay money I owe, but it does not

matter whether I hand it over with my left or my right hand. By contrast, every detail of a work of art is determined by the universal. E.g. ‘To be or not to be, this is the question’ differs significantly from ‘To be or not to be, that is the question’, and would not serve the same purpose. It is thus impossible to distinguish the general concept of the work from the contingent details of its realization.

4. The ‘thought’ (*Gedanke*) so fully determines the ‘material’ that they are indistinguishable. Hence the material is not ‘externally’ determined by the thought and is thus ‘free’. (Cf. *CJ*, §45. But unlike Kant, Hegel means by ‘thought’ not just the overall plan of the work but its inner meaning.)

5. *Begriff*.

6. Kant believes that the reconciliation of the universal and the particular, etc., takes place only in the minds of the artist and his audience; it is not intrinsic to the work of art as such any more than to natural objects.

7. *Kritik*: ‘critique’, i.e. *CJ*.

LXXXIII. 1. Since Kant’s aesthetics involves crucial ‘defects’ (end of LXXXII), it was Schiller, an artist with a ‘philosophic mind’, but not a philosopher ‘as such’, who first championed the principle of ‘totality and reconciliation’.

2. *abstrakte Unendlichkeit des Gedankens*: lit. ‘abstract infinity of thought’. Hegel probably has in mind not primarily that thought is endless or goes on for ever, but that it is infinite because it is self-enclosed (cf. the ‘self-related rationality’ of section LXXVII and n. 4), and abstract because it lacks sensory content. The feature of thought, duty, etc. here

stressed is their separation from nature etc. But since nature etc. is a 'limit' or 'barrier', a *Schranke*, i.e. not only a limit (*Grenze*) but a limit that is felt as a limit and as needing to be overcome, nature etc. require, Hegel implies, to be overcome, e.g. conceptualized by thought, repressed and controlled by duty, etc. But since thought, duty, etc., when conceived in this way, *essentially* involve opposition to nature etc., another barrier appears as soon as one has been overcome: there is always more to be understood and explained, more passions to be subdued, etc. Thus as well as being infinite in the sense of 'self-related, -contained', and also opposed to nature etc. (and in *that* way also 'finite', in the sense of 'bounded, having an end'), thought and duty are also involved in an endless progression of overcoming a nature etc. that continually re-emerges as a new barrier to be overcome.

3. *jenen gestaltlosen Verstand – welcher...fasst*: lit. 'that shapeless understanding – which apprehends etc' Strictly it is only the 'intelligence' that is said to 'apprehend etc.', not 'thought' and 'duty for duty's sake'. But Bosanquet probably gives the right meaning.

4. Kant, Hegel implies, restricted totality and reconciliation (in contrast to opposition or antithesis) to art and living organisms, and also regarded it as subjective. Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) made them objective and central to philosophy. Hegel himself wants to extend them throughout philosophy: e.g. *Sittlichkeit*, in contrast to *Moralität*, is not in endless conflict with our passions, but moulds and embraces them. See section LXXI,n. 5.

5. *Begriff*: i.e. conceptual thought.

6. *die stets sich gleichbleibende, vom Begriff ungetriebte*

Unbefangenheit und Objektivität Goethes: lit. 'Goethe's continually uniform straightforwardness and objectivity, undisturbed by conceptual thought'.

LXXXIV. 1. On Goethe's discoveries in morphology and errors in optics, see Helmholtz's *Popular Lectures*, series 1, lecture ii; but compare Schopenhauer, *Über das Sehen und the Farben* [On Seeing and Colours] [B]. Hegel (like Schopenhauer) had a higher opinion of Goethe's scientific researches, esp. his theory of colours, than most *scientists*, both of the time and since. Goethe argued that colours are mixtures of white light and darkness, while Newton held white light to contain all the colours of the spectrum. For Hegel, Newton epitomizes the 'science of the mere understanding'.

2. *Verstandesbetrachtung*: lit. the 'understanding's view', rather than 'science' (*Wissenschaft*).

3. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*, tr. E. M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford, 1967). The letters first appeared in *Die Horen*, and, in 1801, in a collection of Schiller's prose.

4. 'Compare Browning's *Luria*:

A people is but the attempt of many
To rise to the completer life of one' [B].

5. *kanonische*: lit. 'canonical'.

6. *des Sittlichen*: in Hegel's usage, 'the ethical, ethics' rather than 'morality'.

7. Schiller's views, in Hegel's reasonably accurate interpretation of them, are very similar to Hegel's own. But in his overall system, Hegel does not assign a dominant role to beauty and art.

8. Über Anmuth und Würde [On Grace and Dignity] (1793).

LXXXV. 1. wissenschaftlich: lit. 'scientifically', but 'systematically' or 'philosophically' come closer to Hegel's meaning.

2. Idee.

3. Begriff.

4. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775–1854). Among his voluminous and varied works, the *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), tr. P. Heath (Charlottesville, 1978), is the most complete and systematic expression of his views. His lectures on art of 1802–3 and 1804–5 are translated by D. W. Stott as *The Philosophy of Art* (Minneapolis, 1989). The error to which Hegel refers is probably the view, expressed in the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, that art is the pinnacle of philosophy, that art is in fact higher than philosophy, since the creativity of the artistic genius combines the freedom characteristic of mind or spirit with the unfathomable necessity characteristic of nature. (But in his lectures, Schelling tends to regard art as co-ordinate with philosophy, rather than superior to it.) For Hegel, by contrast, religion and philosophy are higher than art, and what underpins philosophy is not art, but logic.

5. Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68), esp. in his *History of Art in Antiquity* (1764). Cf. section xxxm, n. 2.

LXXXVI. 1. The brothers August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1769–1845) and Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829). Excerpts from their writings are contained in *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, ed. K. Wheeler (Cambridge, 1984).

2. kritischen: although the Schlegels were critics (i.e.

connoisseurs and assessors) of art and were also imbued with the spirit of Kant's *Critiques*, Hegel means primarily that they were critics of the views of others, rather than systematic and constructive thinkers, i.e. 'philosophical'.

3. The German heroic epic that reached its final form about 1200.

4. See section [XXXIV](#), n. 2.

5. Baron Ludwig von Holberg (1684–1754), a Danish historian and dramatist. In his *Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, tr. J. Black (London, 1846), A. W. von Schlegel ranks him with Molière. He was also admired by the most talented critic of the Romantic circle, Ludwig Tieck.

[LXXXVII](#). 1. *Ironie*: this derives (via the Latin *irona*) from the Greek *eironeia*, which meant 'dissimulation, pretended ignorance' and was seen as a fault, esp. of Socrates in Plato's dialogues. F. Schlegel revived the term and explicitly connected it with Socratic irony, but extended its meaning considerably. Knox, p. 69, says that it is 'generally understood to mean that the writer, while still creative and emotional, should remain aloof and self-critical'. This is one aspect of its meaning, but not the whole of it: on Knox's account, for example, almost any respectable writer would be ironical, but Hegel, at least, failed to discern irony in *Romeo and Juliet*. Hegel implies that 'irony', in 'all its manifold shapes', resists brief definition. Bosanquet often writes 'the irony', where we would normally say 'irony'. He translates literally the normal German expression *die Ironie* (German here requires a definite article where English does not), possibly to convey that Romantic irony is only one type of irony.

2. Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) did not apply his philosophy to art in this way, and, though admired by the Romantics, he was not close to their circle. Hegel again implies that he finds the notion of irony complex and elusive, and that Fichte illuminates only ‘one of its aspects’.

3. Schelling wrote several works under the influence of Fichte, esp. those translated by F. Marti in *The Unconditional in Human Knowledge: Four Early Essays (1794–1796)* (Lewisburg, Pa., 1980). But by 1800, Schelling was arguing that philosophy cannot be exclusively idealist, but must consist of two parallel disciplines: transcendental idealism, in which nature and spirit (including history and art) are deduced from the pure I or ego; and philosophy of nature, which conversely derives the mind (including the pure I) from nature. For a time Schelling argued that nature and mind are two manifestations of a single, neutral absolute, which is, in itself, neither objective nor subjective. Hegel discussed the divergence between Fichte and Schelling in his first book, *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy* (1801), tr. W. Cerf and H. S. Harris (Albany, NY, 1977). Schelling was close to the Romantic circle in Jena. But F. Schlegel wrote that ‘Schelling's philosophy – which might be called mysticism made critical – ends, like Aeschylus' Prometheus, in earthquake and ruins.’

4. In his *Science of Knowledge [Wissenschaftslehre]* (1794), tr. P. Heath and J. Lachs (New York, 1970). Fichte's doctrine is ontological (the I produces or constitutes the world); epistemological (the main features of the world can be derived from a consideration of the I and its operations); and moral (the purpose of the I in creating the world is to produce a theatre for the exercise of its freedom and for the fulfilment of its moral endeavours).

5. The I is simply the I as such. It does not include the emotional, sensory, etc. states of which it is, or later becomes, the bearer; these are among the things it produces, not intrinsic features of the I. The I is thus not one I (or 'self' or 'ego') among others; the existence of others, of a 'Thou' over against the I, is something to be deduced from the I.

6. This is Schlegel's interpretation of Fichte, rather than Fichte's own view. Schlegel's version differs from Fichte in two respects: (i) For Schlegel the I is now the individual ego of the Romantic. For Fichte the I is a metaphysical principle, in virtue of whose creative activity the world and its main features, physical states of affairs and moral values, are necessary and objective with respect to any particular person. I cannot simply decide that I am in New York or that lechery is a virtue, (ii) Even the absolute I cannot, in Fichte's view, create or destroy whatever it likes. The I acts with freedom, i.e. it is not determined from outside, but not wilfully or arbitrarily, since its creativity is governed by necessary laws.

It may be, however, that Hegel has in mind the application of Fichteanism to art: the artist's or author's position in relation to the fictional world that he creates is not unlike that of Fichte's I in relation to the real world, except that the artist has more free play in his creativity. But Hegel does not introduce art explicitly until section xci.

7. 'The Baccalaureus' speech in [Goethe's] *Faust* (Part 2), *Die Welt, sie war nicht, eh' ich sie erschuf* [The world, it was not, before I created it], etc., appears to be a parody of Fichte's ideas in this aspect' [B].

LXXXVIII. 1. The Fichte-Schlegel doctrine is applied here primarily to morality and religion: moral or religious values,

codes, institutions, etc. are binding (on me) only if I accept them. The plausibility of this doctrine – (1) ‘Whether e.g. murder is wrong (for me) depends solely on me’ – perhaps stems in part from its conflation with a distinct and more reasonable doctrine: (2) ‘It is up to me to decide, on the arguments and evidence available to me, whether (to believe that) murder is wrong or not.’ That the two doctrines are distinct is clear from their non-moral counterparts: (ia) ‘Whether the world is flat or not depends on me’ and (2a) ‘It is up to me to decide, on the available evidence, whether or not (to believe that) the world is flat.’ (But (2) and (2a) tend to degenerate into (1) and (ia) if one adds: ‘It is up to me to decide what counts as evidence and as legitimate inferences from it.’) Fichte accepted (2) and (2a), i.e. that there are facts and values that are objective in relation to the *individual* I, but it is up to the individual to decide what they are. But he rejected (1) and (ia), i.e. that there are no objective facts or values and it is up to the individual to invent his own. (The absolute I, by contrast, engages in *rule-governed* invention.) Schlegel, in Hegel’s account, accepted (1), as well as (2), but seems to have balked at (1a).

2. *Schein*: this moves the Fichte–Schlegel doctrine into the realm of art, via the ambiguity of *Schein*. (See sections [VI](#), n. 3, and [XIV](#), n. 1.) If we view things as *Schein*, we view them as the artist does: it *does* depend solely on the artist whether within his work the world is flat or murder is permissible, esp. if we accept (1) and (1a) (in n. 1 above) and thereby imply that the artist’s work is subject to no external moral, religious or even epistemological constraints.

[LXXXIX](#). **1.** ‘The three points are, (i) The I is abstract, (ii) Everything is a semblance for it. (iii) Its own acts, even, are

a semblance' [B].

2. Hegel's train of thought is this: the first two points might suggest that the Fichtean ironist should do nothing definite, withdraw from the world and form no attachments to anything; but this is not an option open to him – even the ironist must live some definite type of life.

3. This sentence presents several problems:

(1) Hegel implies that sections [LXXXVII](#) and [LXXXVIII](#) have discussed Fichtean irony in relation to art, explaining e.g. the relation between irony and aestheticism and why the ironist should want to live artistically. But those sections did not discuss art explicitly.

(2) Now that Hegel has introduced beauty and art, we would expect him to deal with 'living as artist' in the sense of 'producing works of art', rather than 'forming one's life artistically'. These two types of life are distinct: one can produce many works of art without regarding, or forming, one's life as a work of art, and vice versa.

(3) The sentence implies that the Fichtean ironist has other options open to him than to live artistically, that he makes a distinct decision to live artistically and then infers from his Fichtean principles that to live artistically is to treat everything as *Schein*. But this is not so. If he remains true to his Fichtean irony, the ironist has no option but to treat everything as *Schein*. No premise about art is required to reach this conclusion. But art and beauty are then relevant in two ways: (i) To treat everything as *Schein* is in fact to live artistically; and (ii) the ironist has only aesthetic criteria available for deciding what to do and how to shape his life.

A rough paraphrase of the sentence would be: 'Now this is

where art and beauty come in: if one is a Fichtean ironist, then one can only live artistically, etc'

4. The immediate application of Fichteanism to art would be that the artist's relation to his work is analogous to the absolute I's relation to the world. Since the absolute I is constrained in its creativity, the analogy need not imply that the artist can put what he likes into his work: he may be constrained by e.g. his Christian religion and bound to express it in his art. Schlegel, by contrast, holds that the artist is bound by no such constraints, and, if he expresses a moral or religious message, should do so tongue in cheek. Hegel himself accepts that art involves treating things as *Schein*, but not in Schlegel's sense: the artist as such should express in earnest the highest beliefs of his age.

5. *bornierte*: 'narrow-minded'.

6. '*Formal freedom* is detachment from everything, or the (apparent) capacity of alternatives; it is opposed to *real freedom*, which is identification of oneself with something that is capable of satisfying one' [B].

7. *Genialität*: 'the character or state of mind in which genius is dominant – here, the mere self-enjoyment of genius' [B].

8. *Selbstgenuss*: 'I do not think it means self-indulgence, but the above-described enjoyment of reposing in the superiority of the ego' [B].

xc. 1. *nächste*: lit. 'next, nearest'. But since the form of irony here described is essentially the same as that described in LXXXIX, *nächste* means not 'next' but e.g. 'immediate'. (The particular forms taken by irony are contrasted with its 'universal import' in the preceding paragraph. As often in Hegel, the first of the particular forms is the same as the

universal import.)

2. *Eitelkeit*: it ‘also = “conceit” which is the older side of this attitude. Hegel uses it on purpose’ [B]. Throughout this section Hegel exploits the double meaning of *Eitelkeit* and of the adjective *eitel* (‘empty, vacuous’ and ‘conceited’. ‘Vanity’ and ‘vain’ have a similar ambiguity.

3. Hegel has in mind esp. Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg, 1772–1801), who was a close and penetrating student of Fichte, a friend and collaborator of the Schlegels, and a victim of sickly yearning –for the Christian Middle Ages, for reunion with his dead fiancée Sophie von Kiihn, and for his own death.

4. *s’chonseligkeit* seems to be really a word formed like *redselig* [“talkative, garrulous”, from *Rede*, “speech, talk, etc.” and the suffix *-selig*], etc., but to be given an equivocating reference to *schöne Seele* [lit. “beautiful soul”], which I have rendered in the next sentence by “saintly soul” [B]. The ‘saintly’ or ‘beautiful soul’, too pure to dirty his hands by intervention in worldly affairs, was a stock theme of German literature, esp. Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister*. Hegel often criticizes this ‘morbid’ beautiful soul. Here he contrasts it with the ‘true’ beautiful soul who is ready to act decisively, and thereby to incur the guilt that, in Hegel’s view, all action entails.

5. *erfüllen*: ‘fill, fulfil, accomplish, etc’ ‘This recurring phrase may be used etymologically, as a reminiscence of the Platonic *plêrousthai*’ [B]. In 1808, F. Schlegel, like many Romantics, converted to Catholicism. Irving Babbitt, in *Rousseau and Romanticism* (New York, 1955), p. 205, wrote: ‘The affinity of certain romantic converts for the Church is

that of the jellyfish for the rock. It is appropriate that Friedrich Schlegel, the great apostle of irony, should after a career as a heaven-storming Titan end by submitting to this most rigid of all forms of outer authority.' Schlegel's conversion is not strictly incompatible with irony. The doctrine that claims, causes and values are binding on me only if I endorse them does not entail that I should not endorse them either for a long period or in an authoritarian form. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche perhaps exemplify such authoritarian irony.

XCI. **1.** *in der Poesie*: 'Poetry' includes novels, stories, drama and aphorisms. It was, in this period, the supreme Romantic art.

2. *wietherum*: lit. 'again, anew'. Hegel seems to mean that the ironist now expresses this principle in his art, as well as in his life.

3. *die Darstellung des Gottlichen als des Ironischen*: Hegel means not that they directly portray God as an ironist, but that they attempt to show that irony is the governing principle of things, in that they are valueless apart from *my* endorsement of them, etc. The phrase echoes 'divine geniality' in section LXXXIX (cf. n. 7).

4. The point of the 'self-annihilation' seems to be not that the individuals in whom the values destroy themselves are Fichtean ironists, playing with their values and ideals, but that the values are intrinsically self-refuting. But the doctrine that values, etc. depend for their validity on my endorsement does not entail that they are self-annihilating in this way. Hegel has several reasons for taking this further step:

(i) As a general rule Hegel regards as empty an idealism that denies objectivity to a realm of entities without showing that they demonstrate their own lack of objectivity by their transience, unreliability, etc.

(ii) The supreme value assigned to the individual ego, and the value of irony as a lived ideal, needs to be established by showing the intrinsic worthlessness of the supposedly objective realm. Romantic irony is from the start a moral outlook, and not simply a meta-ethical or epistemological doctrine.

(iii) Fichte himself, liberally interpreted, suggests that values etc. annihilate themselves, since they are created, and can therefore be annihilated, by the *absolute* ego (see section [LXXXVII](#)). But their annihilation by the absolute ego amounts to their self-annihilation, not simply their rejection by an individual ego. Romantic irony, in Hegel's account, continually vacillates between the absolute and the individual ego.

(iv) Irony can most obviously be expressed in art by displaying the *self-annihilation* of values etc.

(v) The portrayal in art of the self-annihilation of values, i.e. their annihilation at the hands of the artist, shows the power of the artist's subjectivity.

But Hegel's motive for taking this step is to associate the Romantics, despite their admiration for art of all types and periods, with a particular type of unsatisfactory art.

5. It is unclear how the portrayal of weak, vacillating characters can show the values that they half-heartedly and temporarily espouse to be self-annihilating. But this is just Hegel's point. His argument is this: We can show the self-

annihilation of values only by showing how the individuals who espouse them come to grief. In comedy what annihilates itself is intrinsically defective, and so its self-annihilation can be shown in the actions of strong, worthy characters who espouse a worthless value or cause. By contrast, intrinsically worthy values can be shown to annihilate themselves only in the actions of weak, worthless characters.

6. So far Hegel has argued that the individuals whose actions show the annihilation of what is (in Hegel's view, not the Romantics') intrinsically worthy are unworthy characters (see n. 5). This sentence adds that unworthy characters are, in this case, those who do not stick to their aim, i.e. characters who, in addition, do not make for good art.

7. *Haltung*: "bearing" in general, and more especially *the* bearing of one who bears himself nobly by reason of a principle' [B],

XCII. 1. Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Solger (1780–1819), a theorist of aesthetics and a close friend of Tieck. Author of *Erwin. Vier Gesprche liber das Schone und the Kunst* [*Erwin. Four Conversations on Beauty and Art*] (Berlin, 1815). Hegel reviewed his *Nachgelassene Schriften und Briefwechsel* [*Posthumous Writings and Correspondence*], eds. L. Tieck and F. von Raumer (Leipzig, 1826), in the *Berliner Jahrbikher fur wis-senschaftliche Kritik* (1828). There, as here, Hegel distinguishes Solger's conception of irony from that of Schlegel and Tieck.

2. Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853): poet, novelist, dramatist, critic, translator, scholar of German, English, Spanish and Italian literature; in particular a distinguished Shakespeare

scholar.

3. For Solger's conception of irony, see the selections in *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, ed. K. M. Wheeler (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 128–50, esp. 145–50. Solger distinguishes between 'false' and 'true' irony. False irony is the irony described by Hegel in section xci, which denies that there are any worthwhile values (e.g. republicanism) or anyone who steadfastly adheres to them (e.g. Cato). True irony accepts that there are decent values with worthy champions, but casts an ironical eye on the eventual destruction of such values (e.g. the fall of the Roman republic), as well as of those that replace them (e.g. the empire). Here Hegel describes Solger's true irony. But Hegel's account is ambiguous and might be interpreted in three ways:

(i) The bare infinite negates itself into the bare finite, and then the finite as such is negated. The result is not the bare infinite or the bare finite, but the infinite embodied in the finite. Karelis (Knox, pp. xx–xxi) takes the passage in this way, and explains it in theological terms: God ('the infinite and universal') negates himself so as to become objective nature ('finiteness and particularity'). But this in turn is negated, by way of animate nature, man and human history, so as to become both subjective and objective – spirit ('the universal and infinite in the finite and particular'). The problem with this interpretation is that it is in essence Hegel's whole system. It is thus unclear why, if Solger held this view, Hegel describes his account of the Idea as incomplete (rather than simply sketchy).

(ii) The infinite and the finite successively negate each other in an endless progression, so that the infinite appears

in the intervals between the finite. E.g. the (finite) Roman republic falls, and in doing so it opens out into the infinite (or 'unbounded, indeterminate'). With the establishment of the (finite) empire, the infinite is negated and becomes finite again. This interpretation of the process is supported by Hegel's description of it as 'this mere dialectic[al] unrest and dissolution both of infinite and of finite'. But its suggestion that the infinite is merely indeterminate and that it is on a par with the finite does not accord well with Solger's own statements on the subject (e.g. 'this very temporality becomes for us a living reality and a continuous revelation of the living presence of the Godhead', *The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, p. 147).

(iii) Finite entities successively negate each other. Since the infinite is also immanent in the finite, the infinite too is in a sense negated, but nevertheless the whole process is a revelation of the infinite. In theological terms: God (the 'Idea') is immanent in the world. But the world displays the endless emergence and destruction of finite entities, in e.g. the birth, growth and death of men, states and civilizations. This process does not, as in (i), advance to a satisfying conclusion or circle back on itself. But the artist catches glimpses of the infinite Idea in the continual destruction of the finite. Thus Solger writes of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*: 'Oedipus' innocence counts for nothing before the natural laws which annihilate him, and yet his transgression of these laws leads him to a miraculous transfiguration' (*The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*,). 148).

XCMII. 1. Tieck went to Jena in 1799. The Schlegels were also there and Jena was the centre of the Romantic circle until 1802, when F. Schlegel left for Paris.

2. In his Foreword to his novel, *History of Mr William Lovell* (1793–6), Tieck endorses Solger's view of irony and refers to it as 'that ethereal spirit which, however much it penetrates into the depths of the work with love, nevertheless hovers disinterested and unconstrained over the whole – that whole which can be created and grasped from this height alone' (*The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, p. 122). He adds that irony in this sense was displayed more by Plato in writing his dialogues than by Socrates in pretending to be ignorant. This account of irony is close to Knox's account, cited in n. 1 to section [LXXXVII](#). 'Irony' in this sense is wide enough in meaning to be applicable even to *Romeo and Juliet*, but perhaps not to e.g. a work whose author identifies himself completely with a non-ironical hero.

[XCIV](#). 1. The argument is: Since (i) art proceeds from the absolute idea (*Idee*) and (ii) the end (*Zweck*, 'purpose') of art is to represent sensuously the absolute, (iii) the divisions of art should depend on the conception (*Begriff*) of artistic beauty as the representation of the absolute (and not simply on some factor extraneous to this conception, such as the materials used by the artist). The argument presents two problems: Does (i) differ significantly in meaning from (ii)? Does (i) make an independent contribution to the argument or would the argument be just as strong if (i) were omitted? If (i) does differ in meaning from (ii), it may mean this: art is not simply the portrayal of an absolute distinct from itself; the absolute essentially manifests itself in the world, and art, like e.g. trees, is one of its manifestations and thus 'proceeds' from it. (This explains in part why the absolute is called the absolute '*Idee*', viz. the concept together with its reality or manifestation: see section [XXXVI](#), n. 5.) On this interpretation (i) is distinct from (ii), since it claims only

that art proceeds from the absolute, not that it represents it. But (i) also supports (iii) : if art proceeds from the absolute, then the divisions of art (like the varieties of tree) should have their source in the absolute. There may also be in (i) the further suggestion that since art in some sense proceeds from the absolute idea, art should have the logical structure of the Idea, i.e. the reality of art (its divisions or parts) should spring from the concept(ion) of art. On that interpretation (i) licenses the move from (ii) to (iii), the argument then being: (i) since art proceeds from the absolute idea, its reality or divisions should spring from its concept; (ii) the concept of art is to represent the absolute sensuously; therefore (iii) its divisions spring from this concept.

XCV. 1. *Idee*: this does not differ significantly from the ‘absolute idea’ and the ‘absolute’ of section xciv. But see n. 3 below.

2. *Bestimmung*: lit. ‘determination, specification’.

3. The content (*Inhalt*) of art can be (i) the theme, e.g. the anger of Achilles; (ii) the Idea or absolute; or (iii) the conception of the Idea or absolute current in a given society. Although a given theme may be hard to represent adequately, the theme cannot be what Hegel has in mind here since the theme of a work is only remotely connected with the Idea and with the divisions of art. We might suppose, by contrast, that the Idea or absolute is always the same and cannot vary in its capability of artistic representation. This leaves (iii), the current conception of the Idea, which is both connected with the Idea and varying in its capability of artistic representation. It is, however, a

mistake to think that, in Hegel's view, the Idea, in contrast to our conceptions of it, is unchanging. The Idea essentially realizes itself in our developing conception of it, i.e. God's consciousness of himself develops in our consciousness of him (cf. section [XLVII](#), n. 2). Thus the Idea or absolute develops over time, and at some stages (e.g. Greek) it is more readily representable in art than at others (e.g. Egyptian).

[xcvi](#). 1. This requirement is less a distinct requirement than a corollary of the first: section xcv argued that the content should be artistically representable; this section argues that an abstract content is not artistically representable.

2. 'It is natural for a reader to ask in *what* person or subject God is conceived to have reality. On this see [section cxi]. It appears certain to me that Hegel, when he writes thus, is referring to the self-consciousness of individual human beings as constituting, and reflecting on, an ideal unity between them. This may seem to put a non-natural meaning on the term "person" or "subject", as if the common element of a number of intelligences could be a single person. It is obvious that the question hinges on the degree in which a unity that is not sensuous but ideal can be effective and actual. I can only say here, that the more we consider the nature of ideal unity the higher we shall rate its capabilities' [B]. The Christian god is a person or subject for several reasons and at different levels: e.g. its bifurcation into Father, Son and Spirit is parallel to the bifurcation of an I or subject into an object of which it is conscious and then into consciousness of itself or self-consciousness; Christ and the members of the Christian community are persons; the members of the community are linked by an 'ideal unity',

etc. A central difference, in Hegel's view, between Christianity and e.g. Judaism is that the Christian community, and human life in general, is seen as a phase, in fact the highest phase, of God – his self-consciousness. Thus the view that God's personality consists in an 'ideal unity' between human beings is rooted in his religious interpretation of Christianity, as well as in his philosophical interpretation of it (as logical idea–nature–mind/ spirit; cf. section [XL](#), n. 3). But this is of little relevance here, where Hegel is primarily concerned with medieval Christianity and the portrayal in art not only of Christian worshippers, saints and ordinary human beings (the 'Holy Spirit'), but also of Christ (the 'Son') and occasionally, though less appropriately, of God the Father.

3. The Christian god is a trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father is, in Hegel's view, universal, since it is, in itself, indeterminate and abstract. But it is concrete in that it generates a particular element, the Son, and then returns 'to unity with itself in the individual element, the Spirit. (Universality–particularity–individuality, with individuality conceived as the restoration of universality out of particularity, is a fundamental schema in Hegel's thought.) The god of Judaism and of Islam is, in Hegel's view, essentially only the first member of this trinity, shorn of its tendency to generate the second and third members. It is thus abstract and 'untrue', since it does not fulfil its nature and grow into a differentiated but self-contained whole. (One of Hegel's objections to a god so conceived is that he is 'finite', since he is distinct from, and thus bounded by, the world.) It can 'afford no material for art, least of all for plastic art' (i.e. sculpture and painting, while it can figure in poetry), both because it lacks internal complexity and

because sensory appearance is no part of its nature. The Christian god is representable in art, both because of his complexity and because appearance in a sensory form, in Christ and the Church, is an essential feature of him. But in sections [xvi](#) and [xcviii](#), Hegel concedes that, unlike Greek gods, he is not fully representable in art: art portrays, as it were, only the tip of the Christian iceberg. (The Judaic and Islamic icebergs, by contrast, are fully submerged.)

[xcvii](#). 1. *Fackeldistel*: ‘torch thistle’, ‘a plant of the genus *Cereus*, Nat. Order *Cactaceae*’ [B].

2. The argument of this section is as follows: The content of art is concrete and thus tends towards, or cries out for, sensory manifestation. But it cannot adequately manifest itself in any random sensory phenomenon. The Christian god cannot manifest himself in a uniform patch of red, since that is insufficiently concrete, nor in variegated tropical vegetation, since that, though in a sense ‘concrete’, has no meaning. The content and its sensory manifestation must complement each other or meet half-way: just as the content points out towards its manifestation, so the phenomenon that manifests it points inwards to a meaning. (Hegel associates the concreteness of the sensory form with its unity, not only because complexity involves the unity of what is complex, but also because what has, or is seen as having, a meaning must be (seen as) a unity – as a single human body rather than as a collection of limbs, as a single word, sentence or poem rather than a collection of letters, etc.) If a sensory phenomenon has a meaning, then it calls for, cries out for, an audience or spectator. The heart and mind of the spectator is the counterpart of the content or the meaning of the phenomenon. The content or meaning lies at

some depth beneath the sensory phenomenon; the spectator's mind lies at a corresponding depth behind his sensory reception of that phenomenon. The sensory phenomenon is the point at which the content and the mind of the spectator meet.

Hegel refers to two types of sensory phenomena that have a meaning: (i) objects or events such as the human body or the Crucifixion; (ii) works of art; and a class of objects that have no meaning and thus no call for a spectator: (iii) birds' plumage, torch thistles, etc. He seems to regard (i), esp. the human body, as more than merely an analogue of (ii), since he suggests that items of type (i) are to be portrayed in (ii): 'an actual phenomenon of the external world is chosen'. But he tends to conflate (i) and (ii), and to contrast (iii) with (ii) rather than with (i). In fact he should compare (iii) with (i), and at least consider the possibility that insignificant entities can form the theme of significant works of art. This would give four types of object, rather than three: (i) significant entities; (ii) artistic portrayals of significant entities; (iii) insignificant entities; and (iv) artistic portrayals of intrinsically insignificant entities. Hegel unfairly discounts the possibility of (iv) by rejecting (iii) as insignificant.

An obvious reason for this confusion is that Hegel finds it hard to see how significant art could have a theme that is insignificant apart from its portrayal in art. A less obvious reason is that Hegel takes seriously his claims (cf. section [XLVII](#), n. 2) that art is as much God's work as nature is and that art proceeds from the absolute idea. God's drive to manifest himself is a drive to appear in art, as well as in nature and history. Art is the absolute's self-manifestation, not simply our portrayal of its self-manifestation. Art differs from God's manifestation in nature and history in that it

makes thematic use of these other manifestations. But the natural and historical manifestations of which art makes such use may be possible rather than actual: it matters little whether the Greek gods appeared in human form outside art or whether Christ's life and crucifixion actually occurred; the central manifestation of God is in the 'absolute idea', i.e. at this stage, in art.

This is why Hegel tends to conflate significant phenomena and art, and moves quickly from one to the other, from the claim that God reveals himself in phenomena, and art portrays this revelation, to the claim that God reveals himself in phenomena, i.e. in art. Art does not simply portray God; it is an aspect of his highest phase, spirit, and thus puts the finishing touches on to God, or, rather, is that in which God puts the finishing touches on himself.

[xcviii](#). **1.** *zufällig*: 'contingent'. The sensory portrayal of the Judaic god would be 'accidental' or contingent, since he had no drive to reveal himself in a sensory form, and no sensory phenomenon can represent him non-arbitrarily or non-conventionally. We might choose to represent him by e.g. a red patch, but this would be our arbitrary choice, and no better or worse than any other way of representing him. The sensory representation of the Christian god is not accidental in this sense, but it does not follow that it is either the 'highest', or a complete and adequate, representation of him. The overall argument of the section is this: Thought of an appropriately concrete sort is a higher way of grasping and representing anything – even something that is essentially and not accidentally portrayed in art – than the sensory, artistic form. But not all content 'essentially demands' to be grasped in thought. The Greek gods are adequately represented in art and do not call for thought, while the

Christian god can be grasped adequately only in thought.

2. Conceptual thought is a higher medium than sensory art, both because it is the essence of man (cf. sections [XXI](#) and [LVII](#), n. i) and because it can represent things that sensory art cannot. (Even the Greek gods *can* be represented in thought – now at least, if not by the Greeks themselves.)

3. It is hard to justify Hegel's belief that the Greek gods were adequately portrayed in art, especially since Greek philosophers, from early on, claimed that art distorted the truth about the gods (see section [XVI](#), n. 4). His reasons are: (i) the inner harmony of Greek art, esp. sculpture; (ii) the assumed absence of philosophical or conceptual thought at the time of the formation of Greek religious beliefs. It is true that e.g. Egyptian art fails adequately to express its message, even though this message was not adequately, or originally, expressed in Egyptian conceptual thought. But Egyptian art lacks the inner harmony of Greek art.

4. 'Or "as spirit and in spirit" ' [B].

5. It is not very clear why, in Hegel's view, Christianity cannot be adequately expressed in art. 'Spirit' and spirituality play an ambiguous role here. In section [XCVII](#) the human body is said to represent spirit, but here the spirituality of the Christian god is given as the reason why he cannot be adequately represented in a sensory form. The solution is that the human body *non-contingently* represents all human spirituality, but it *adequately* represents only the spirituality of relatively unreflective beings such as Greek gods. Adequate representation of higher levels of spirit requires conceptual language, rather than mere body language or even the pictorial language of Greek poetry.

Christianity eludes adequate sensory representation for several reasons: it is complexly triadic; God the Father cannot be non-contingently represented in art; Christ and the members of the community have a rich inner spiritual depth that cannot be adequately represented in art; and the structures of 'ideal unity' cannot be adequately represented in art (cf. section [XCVI](#), n. 3). The reason why Christianity acquired a content that thus eludes adequate sensory representation is that Christianity, unlike Greek religion, was, in Hegel's view, a product primarily of religious and philosophical thought, rather than of art itself. A message that is originated by conceptual thought tends to transcend the bounds of adequate sensory expression and, when taken over by the artist, to produce disharmony within the work of art.

6. *Begriff(s)*.

[XCIX](#). 1. *Begriff*: 'the idea [or concept] of art' [B]. The point here is the extent to which art can realize its concept, i.e. be good (or perfect) art. Elsewhere in the section 'idea' is *Idee*, i.e. the idea expressed or revealed in art.

c. 1. This refers not to the perfect coincidence of form and content in art, but to the adequate representation of spirit (in its highest form) in thought. Conceptual thought is the only form or medium adequate to the 'conception' or 'notion' (*Begriff*) of spirit, both because only thought can fully represent it and because thought is the fundamental essence of spirit.

2. The argument is this: The fully developed form of spirit is spirit expressed in thought (cf. n. 1 above). But to reach this level, spirit must go through a series of ascending stages.

At each stage spirit 'supplies itself with a certain 'content' (i.e. roughly, a conception of the absolute) and expresses, and becomes conscious of, this content in a corresponding art form.

Hegel often compares the growth of spirit to that of a plant: a plant begins as a seed in which its nature or concept is only implicit, passes through various phases of growth, and eventually realizes explicitly the concept implicit in the seed. This analogy explains why the final form of spirit (spirit expressed in thought) supplies a 'principle of division' for the 'science of art', why, that is, the stages leading up to this final form have their 'ground' in this 'idea' (*Begriff*): the concept of spirit, like the concept encoded in a seed, specifies and generates not only the final form (the fully realized concept), but also the stages by which it is reached.

Several problems remain, however:

(i) The fact that the stages of a plant's growth are determined by its seed does not entail that we can discover what those stages are simply by inspecting the seed. But Hegel may have held, in view of Goethe's biological researches, that inspection of the fully developed plant will reveal to us the stages of its growth. Similarly, he seems to believe that the philosopher of art can discern the stages of art, at least in their broad outlines, by examining the concept of art or of beauty – which is an aspect of spirit expressed in thought rather than of art itself. (It is the philosopher, not the artist, who needs to concern himself with the *concept* of art.)

(i) A plant goes through only one series of stages. The development of spirit, by contrast, involves two parallel 'evolutions' (*verlauf(e)*): those of content and of art form.

some times, when Hegel discusses an evolution of content and of form, he attempts to combine the two evolutions by arguing that the form of one stage constitutes the content of the succeeding stage: in the Introduction to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, for example, he argues that the *consciousness* of an object involved at one stage forms the *object* of the succeeding type of consciousness in the evolutionary advance. But here the evolutions of form and of content are regarded as intimately related but distinct evolutions, and Hegel does not suggest that the art form of one stage constitutes the content of the following stage. (But see also section cvII, n. 6).

(iii) In other works (e.g. the *Encyclopaedia*, III, and *The Phenomenology of Spirit*) the various religions and earlier phases of philosophy are treated as stages of spirit's progress towards full realization, whether as stages that appear *after* art or, more plausibly, as stages running parallel to the development of art. Here, by contrast, it seems that the ascending stages involve only art, and philosophy or conceptual thought is only the terminus of the development. But Hegel is probably thinking of religion and philosophy, in so far as they become (in the later stages) independent of art, as supplying the *content* of art and thus as playing a crucial part in the process.

C. 1. This is the *second* ‘evolution’ mentioned in section C, not, that is, the evolution of the content, but the evolution of the ‘plastic forms of art’. The evolution of the *content* is not strictly ‘within the art-spirit’: in its later stages at least, it develops in relative independence of art.

2. ‘The two evolutions are, speaking roughly, (i) that of the subject-matter; (ii) that of the particular mode of art: (i) e.g. you have Egyptian, Greek, Christian religion, etc., with the corresponding views and sentiments, each in its own relation to art; (ii) you have, as a cross division to the former, the several arts – sculpture, music, poetry, etc., each having its special ground and warrant’ [B]. This is inaccurate. Bosanquet’s (i), the succession of religions, is the first evolution mentioned in section C, the evolution of the content or ‘subject-matter’. But that is not at issue in this section. The ‘two sides’ of the ‘evolution within the art-spirit’ are (I) the ‘forms’ of art, esp. the symbolic, classical and romantic art forms (which respectively express the world-views of the oriental, Greek and Christian religions, but are not *identical* with those religions); and (2) the arts – architecture, etc. These two sides are both included in the ‘plastic forms of art’ (*Gestaltungen der Kunst*) of section C. This section, in contrast to en, views (1) as universal and (2) as particular (the ‘special [*besonderen*] arts’. See section CIH, n. 6.

3. ‘He is asking himself why sound or paint, etc., should correspond to one type of art as theoretically defined – this being intellectual, not sensuous, at root – and answers that these media *qua* natural objects have, though more latent than in works of art, an import and purpose of their own, which reveals itself in their suitability to particular forms of

art' [B].

Bosanquet's note is obscure, in part because he here overlooks the distinction between (i) the art forms (symbolism, etc.) and (ii) the arts (architecture etc.). Hegel's main question is: How are the art forms, which are 'spiritual' and general, and thus not 'restricted to any one material' (as e.g. the classical art form is not restricted to stone, but can be realized in paint, sounds, words, etc.), related to the particular arts, which are distinguished from each other primarily in terms of which of the 'manifold varieties of matter' they employ? A subsidiary question may be: How can the arts, which are also spiritual, be specially related to certain types of matter, e.g. music to sound? Hegel's (not very satisfactory) answer to both questions is that the 'concept' is the 'soul' or essence of 'sensuous existence'. Thus a particular type of matter, e.g. sound, may be the differentiating feature of an art, e.g. music, and have, like the art, a special affinity to a particular art form, e.g. romanticism.

4. Not matter or its varieties, but 'sensuous existence' (*das sinnliche Dasein*).

5. *Begriff*: I have replaced Bosanquet's 'Idea', which elsewhere translates *Idee*, with 'idea'. (*Idee* is out of place here, since the *Idee* is analogous not to the soul, but to body and soul combined.) Hegel develops his view that sensuous existence has the concept for its soul, i.e. that nature embodies implicitly the same logical structure or conceptual system as is involved in the human mind, mainly in the *Philosophy of Nature* (*Encyclopaedia*, II).

2. *Ideal*: i.e. the *Idee* of beauty, in contrast to the *Idee* of truth or that of the good. Cf. section xxxvi, n. 5.

3. These matters are considered at greater length in Part I of the lectures (Knox, *LA*, 1, pp. 91–298).

4. *Begriff(e)*.

5. *Gestaltungsformen*: lit. ‘forms of shaping’. ‘I use “plastic” all through in a pregnant sense, as one speaks of plastic fancy, etc.; meaning ideally determinate, and fit for translating into pictures, poetry, etc. These “plastic forms” are the various modifications of the subject-matter of art’ [B]. (See section xxII, n. 4, on the meaning of *Plastik* and *plastisch* in German.) These *Gestaltungsformen* are the first of the two sides referred to in section ci (see ci, n. 2), i.e. the symbolic, classical and romantic art forms. Here they are conceived not as universal (as in ci), but as particular, in contrast to the universal idea of artistic beauty. They are dealt with in Part II of the lectures (Knox, *LA*, 1, pp. 299–611).

6. *einzelnen*, lit. ‘individual, singular’, not, as in section ci, *besonderen*, lit. ‘particular’. The arts themselves – the second of the two ‘sides’ of section ci – are now regarded as individual, not individual *works* of art. But Hegel may be influenced by the fact that it is in this part of the lectures (Part III, Knox, *LA*, 11) that he considers individual works of art. Hegel’s triad of universal, particular and individual derives from two distinctions made in the standard logic of his day: (i) between a general or determinable concept (e.g. coloured), a determinate concept (e.g. red) and an individual (e.g. this rose); (ii) between a universal judgement (e.g. ‘All dogs hate cats’), a particular judgement (‘Some dogs hate cats’) and an individual judgement (‘Fido

hates cats’).

7. This is the first occurrence in the lectures of the idea that the arts form a system which completes itself or rounds itself off (*sich abrundet*). Cf. section cxv, n. 7.

CHII. 1. Hegel here speaks as if the Idea (*Idee*) appeared in only two forms, in logic as the Idea as such and in art as the beautiful in art. But in fact it appears in nature, in the mind of the individual (‘subjective spirit’), in our social and political institutions (‘objective spirit’), and in our attempts to discover the truth about (or ‘of’) the world, i.e. not only art, but also religion and philosophy. Hegel’s central point is that all of these spheres have, or disclose, a fundamental logical or conceptual structure, which emerges in its pure form (‘as such’) at the end of the Logic (e.g. *Encyclopaedia*, 1, §§ 236–44). It is only in art that the Idea is also the ideal. In other spheres, e.g. cognition and morality, Hegel is opposed to the view (which he associates esp. with Kant) that the Idea, e.g. of truth or of the good, is an *ideal* that we strive for but may never attain. See also section xxxvi, n. 5.

2. Hegel here speaks as if he is distinguishing *the* Idea from particular ideas, e.g. those of a horse, a duck, etc., and arguing that an accurate or lifelike portrayal of such entities does not constitute the ‘beauty of the ideal’. But the rest of the section makes it clear that what he has in mind is rather the correct and unambiguous (but not necessarily lifelike) representation of a world-view by a symbol (which again need not be portrayed in an accurate or lifelike way). E.g. Christianity may be represented by a cross or a fish, or Islam by a crescent, but representing it in this way does not amount to the beauty of the ideal. (It is what, in section xcvi, he means by ‘accidental’ or ‘contingent’

representation.) Chinese, Egyptian and Indian art, he implies, achieved 'correctness' of this sort, correctly representing their world-views. But they fell short of the ideal. As he indicates later in the section, the accuracy with which 'natural forms' are portrayed is a secondary issue: its attainment depends as much on the world-view as on the skill of the artist.

3. See section xcvi.

4. The main problem of this section is Hegel's claim that 'the more that works of art excel in true beauty of presentation, the more profound is the inner truth of their content and thought', a corollary of his earlier claim that 'defectiveness of form arises from defectiveness of content'. The difficulty is not, as Hegel seems to suppose, that the adherent of a true and profound doctrine may be a poor artist, but, firstly, that it is not in general true that a true world-view makes for better art than a false one, and, secondly, that Hegel argues, in e.g. section xvi, that Greek religion, a relatively false and unprofound religion, makes for better art than Christianity. Here, as in section xcvi, he evades the difficulty by comparing Christian with oriental art, leaving Greek art out of account, and implying that Christian art fully exemplifies the beauty of the ideal and that in anthropomorphic representations of the Christian god, he is 'completely known in Himself as mind [*Geist*]'. Hegel's confusion has several sources:

(i) He is misled by the parallel between the Idea in art and the Idea in logic (and also in other spheres). This not only establishes a link between artistic beauty and non-aesthetic truth, but also suggests that in art, as in other spheres, the highest form comes at the end. He finds it hard to accept the

fact that art is out of line with religion, philosophy, logic, etc., in that the best art (in the view expressed by Hegel elsewhere) or unsurpassed art (in any reasonable view) comes not at the end, but fairly early on.

(ii) He is also misled by the close parallel, established in section c, between the content of art and the artistic form, where the merit of both is assumed to be the same, but the merit of the content is determined by non-aesthetic criteria.

(iii) His general belief, also apparent in c, that the final stage of a thing, e.g. a plant, fulfils its concept (which also determines all the imperfect stages on the way to its realization) implies that the latest art is the best art. (But art, like a plant, might have gone to seed.)

(iv) His account of the notion of the concrete in section xcvi and/or his application of it in this section is defective. What matters for art is not conceptual concreteness as such, where (as in Christianity, but not Islam or Judaism) the non-accidentally artistically representable tip of the iceberg (the Crucifixion etc.) is determined by unportrayable hidden depths, but the relatively superficial artistically portrayable concreteness of e.g. a system of anthropomorphic deities, which is adequately representable in art, since its mode of representation is not determined by the hidden depths that conceptual concreteness requires. (Cf. section [XCVIII](#), n. 3, where I doubt that Hegel has good reason for assuming that Greek religion had no such depths. But what is relevant here is Hegel's belief, not the justification of it.)

(v) Hegel is perhaps misled by his loose and shifting use of *Inhalt* ('content') and *Bedeutung* ('meaning, significance'), which variously refer to the 'theme', the 'world-view' and the deep, artistically unportrayable aspect of a world-view.

Anything that is artistically portrayable in significant art has, in Hegel's view, some inner depth: Greek statues are not just lumps of stone, but portrayals of gods etc., who in turn have thoughts, emotions, etc., though these are, in his view, adequately represented by their sculpted bodies and by Homer's poetic diction. Especially hazardous is the complementarity of content and sensory form established in section xcvn (see xcvII, n. 2). The content points outwards to a sensory form, while the sensory form points inwards to a meaning. The meaning here is not simply the theme, since Hegel denies such a meaning to e.g. birds and, by implication, to paintings of birds. It is what a theme (e.g. the nailing of a man to a cross or the human form portrayed by a statue) *means*. But whether this meaning is adequately represented in art (like Christ's crucifixion or the Greek gods) or lies at some depth beneath the adequate representation of art (like the artistically unfathomable depths of God the Father and the Trinity) is left unclear.

(vi) Section xcvII also argued that the meaning of a sensory phenomenon is the counterpart to the spectator's mind: the meaning lies, as it were, at the same depth beneath the sensory surface as the spectator's mind stands above it. Thus the adequate artistic representation of the Christian god, which section cm postulates, may, in Hegel's view, depend on an appropriately educated spectator whose mind discerns the meaning of the work. A portrayal of Christ conveys 'God Himself... as mind' to a Christian, schooled in religion and philosophy as well as art, but not to a classical Greek, whose mind was too close to the sensory surface of things to plumb the depths of Christianity. But if this is Hegel's idea, it is unclear how he can maintain that anything is inexpressible in art or deny that oriental art adequately represented its

content to an appropriately schooled oriental audience, if not to us.

CIV. 1. The argument of this section is this: The Idea as such, or in its fully developed form, is a concrete unity, though it is conceived in a relatively abstract way in e.g. Judaic and Egyptian religion. As a concrete unity, it cannot be grasped, initially at least, as a whole. Its various aspects emerge separately, both successively and, often, contemporaneously in different types of art or in different individual artists. (In a similar way, mathematics, even if it forms a single 'concrete' system, was not grasped all at once by any single individual or people.) Eventually these separately discovered aspects or 'particularities' are 'reconciled', synthesized or put together, so as to give a picture of the Idea as a whole. The main set of aspects that emerges in this way is the 'types of art' or the art forms (symbolism, classicism and romanticism – the second 'side' of section ci and the subject of the second part of section en). Each of these art forms corresponds to a different way of conceiving the Idea and, therefore, the form in which the Idea appears. If both the Idea and its form are conceived in a particular way, then the Idea as conceived and its form of appearance as conceived must also be related in a particular way. Hence the essential difference between the art forms consists in the different relations which they involve between the Idea, the 'content', and its form of appearance, the 'shape'. Since these relations emerge from the Idea itself, it is the Idea that supplies the principle for the division of art into art forms. Thus, as we would expect, the principle of division is to be found in the 'conception' (*Begriff*) to be divided, viz. the concept of art.

The argument involves at least four problems:

(1) Since the art forms differ not only in the relation they involve between the content and the 'shape', but also in their conception of the Idea and of the 'form' (*Gestaltung*) in which it manifests itself, why does Hegel locate the defining difference between the art forms (*Kunst-formen*) in the relations rather than in either or both of the other differences between them? He has two reasons for his apparently arbitrary discrimination in favour of relations. First, he needs to show that the differences between the art forms 'emanate from' the Idea or are 'contained in' the concept(ion) of art, not that they *are* the Idea or the concept. It is most obviously the content-form *relations* that emanate from the Idea; to make the difference between the art forms consist in their conception of the Idea would come close to suggesting that the art forms, or the differences between them, *are* the Idea. (But see (3) below.) Second, the form-content relation is more properly an intrinsic aesthetic feature of a work of art than the conception of the Idea that it expresses. Why should the fact that e.g. one statue is of Apollo while another is of Christ be regarded as a significant artistic (rather than religious or doctrinal) difference between them, if this difference does not involve some further difference, e.g. with respect to the internal harmony of the statues as works of art or the adequacy with which they express their respective messages? (See section [XCVIII](#), n. 2.) The conception of the relation between the Idea and its worldly manifestations no doubt also has a place outside art. But in Hegel's view, it carries over into art as such, in a way that the conception of the Idea alone, and that of its manifestations alone, do not.

(2) Is it in fact the case that, in Hegel's account of the art forms, they differ in respect of the relation between content

and shape in the works of art corresponding to them? Hegel's dominant view (but not the only view that he expresses) is this: In classical art, the sensory form expresses the content both non-accidentally and adequately (see section [XCVIII](#), n. 1). In symbolic art, the content is expressed both inadequately and accidentally. In Christian art, the content is expressed non-accidentally, but inadequately. There is the difficulty that modern romantic art, unlike medieval Christian art, seems to express its content accidentally, as well as inadequately (see sections [XVII](#), n. 2, and [CVII](#), n. 1), which suggests that the form-content relation of late romantic art does not differ from the form-content relation of symbolic art. But the difference is that while symbolic art fails to express its content because the content is too vague, indeterminate and undeveloped, romantic art fails to do so because its content is too rich, complex and overdeveloped.

(3) Has Hegel established that the principle of division of art is 'contained' in the concept (ion) of art? Prima facie, he conflates three distinct claims, viz. that the principle of division, i.e. the different ways in which the content of art is related to its shape or form, derives (i) from the Idea as such, (ii) from the 'different modes of grasping the Idea', and (iii) from the concept (ion) of beauty in art, the concept 'whose particularization and division is in question'. The concept of beauty may be similar, if not identical, to the 'Idea as the beautiful in art' of section cm, but it is not the same as the Idea that constitutes the content of art: we would expect an account of the concept of beauty to include not only an account of the Idea, the content of art, but also of the sensory form in which the content appears and of the relation between content and form. Here Hegel seems to be

using *Begrijf* in its ordinary philosophical sense (a sense in which e.g. the concept of an animal can be divided into the concepts of e.g. a vertebrate and an invertebrate), and illicitly equating it with *Idee*, which is used in a different, specially Hegelian sense. He can, however, be defended in two ways. First, even if the *Idee* is here distinct from the *Begrijf*, he can reasonably claim that, in showing that the different form–content relations are implicit in the Idea (or in different modes of grasping it), he has also shown that they are implicit in the concept of art, if this is explicated in terms of content, form, and the relation between them. Second, the Idea, the different modes of grasping it, and the concept of art are not, for Hegel, as sharply distinct as I have suggested. The Idea is not a static entity, indifferent to the ways in which we successively grasp it: it is essential to the idea that it should be grasped in different ways, and it is only in being so grasped that it realizes its nature, or, in theological terms, God himself brings it about that Egyptians, Greeks, Christians, etc. see him in different ways (cf. section [XCVII](#), n. 2). Thus if the different form–content relations ‘emanate’ from the different modes of grasping the Idea, they emanate indirectly from the Idea itself. Again, the concept of artistic beauty is not, in Hegel’s view, simply *our* concept of it: like the concept encoded in the seed of a plant, it is an objective but implicit plan of the development of art, a plan that realizes itself by way of a series of stages whose nature and order is governed by the plan itself. The concept of art is thus not very different from the Idea that constitutes the content of art, let alone the Idea ‘as the beautiful in art’.

(4) Does Hegel believe that the ‘reconciliation’ (*Wiedervermittlung*) of the ‘particularities [*Besonderheiten*] of the Idea’, as well as their ‘expansion’ (*Auseinanderbreitung*),

occurs, or will occur, within art? There are two ways in which such a reconciliation might occur: (i) in some single work of art, artist or art form, which combines the features of the three particular art forms; (ii) simply in the 'totality of particular stages and forms', with no special attempt to combine these stages and forms into a single, multifaceted stage or form. The analogy of geometry, where Euclid 'reconciled' a variety of discoveries made at different times into a single system, or of philosophy, where Hegel himself purports to integrate all the philosophies of the past into a single system, favours (i). The analogy of a plant also favours (i), since, in Hegel's and Goethe's views, a fully developed plant embodies all the central features of the stages of its growth. Schelling expected an art of the future that would combine the central features of ancient Greek art and modern art (*The Philosophy of Art*, §§42ff.). Goethe was sometimes seen (e.g. by F. Schlegel) as an artist who combined classicism and romanticism. But Hegel gives no sign that he hopes for a reconciliation of type (i) within art. The most that art can provide is (ii), the totality of particular stages and forms; the reconciliation of type (i), and even the recognition of these stages and forms as a totality, is performed within philosophy.

cv. 1. *Gestaltung*: 'I do not think this means the process of shaping, but the shapes taken collectively' [B].

2. 'i.e. not in a separate ideal shape devoted to it. He means that man takes a stock or stone as representation or symbol of the divine, and as there is no real connection between divinity and the stone, it may be either left untouched and unshaped, or be hewn into any bizarre or arbitrary shape that comes to hand' [B]. Hegel's argument is

this: The Idea is at first (conceived as) abstract and indeterminate. Thus it does not, like the Greek gods or the Christian god, prescribe the sensory shape in which it is to appear, and its sensory shape is 'external' or intrinsically unconnected to it. (Cf. section [XCVIII](#), n. i, on 'accidental' representation.) It is, however, seeking a shape, and it does so by turning not to some abstracted aspect of the sensory, such as colour or sound (which would imply that some *prior* analysis and categorization of the sensory material has been performed), but to 'natural sensuous matter', e.g. a block of stone, which may subsequently be shaped, but not in ways prefigured by the Idea or adequate to its representation.

In this section, Hegel distinguishes three phases of symbolic art: (i) Natural objects are left unaltered but are 'invested with the substantial Idea as their significance', (ii) In view of the perceived 'foreignness of the Idea to natural phenomena', natural objects are distorted into fantastic shapes in order to 'exalt the phenomenon to the level of the Idea', (iii) Natural objects and 'human shapes and incidents' are left unaltered, but the Idea, their 'inner universal substance', is conceived as related negatively to them, as persisting beyond them 'in exaltation or Sublimity'. On the basis of Hegel's more detailed discussion later in the lectures, Karelis associates these phases with Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and Hebrew poetry respectively (Knox, pp. xlii–xliv). The phases form a natural progression: phase (i) sees natural objects as adequate symbols of the idea; phase (ii) abandons this view and attempts to assimilate objects to the idea; phase (iii) gives up this attempt and sees the idea as transcending all natural objects.

3. 'This description is probably directed, in the first place, to the Indian representation of deities, and would apply to

those of many barbaric religions. But its truth may be simply verified in daily observation of the first attempts of the uneducated at plastic presentation of their ideas, where costliness, ingenuity, labour, or size take the place of beauty' [B]. This is phase (ii) of n. 2 above.

4. 'i.e. an idea or purpose which gives these partial and defective representations all the meaning they have, although they are incapable of really expressing it' [B]. This is phase (iii) of n. 2 above.

5. *Gärung*: lit. 'fermentation'.

CVI. 1. Classical, in contrast to symbolic, art conceives the Idea in a determinate and concrete way, and can thus express it in the 'shape that, according to its [viz. the Idea'] conception [*Begriff*], i.e. "concept, nature", is peculiarly appropriate' to it.

2. This account of classical art (see n. 1) does not mean that *any* accurate portrayal of a natural object is classical, exemplifying a suitable conformity of 'notion [*Begriff*]' and reality. For the content or Idea must, in classical art, be 'concrete' or have an inner depth and meaning that expresses itself in a sensory form. Natural objects lack such depth; 'for only the spiritual is the truly inner [*das wahrhaft Innere*]'. (The addition of self by Bosanquet, and by Knox, p. 78, spoils the argument. Hegel is *arguing* that art must portray the human *self*, not assuming it.)

3. The 'absolute notion' (*ursprüngliche Begriff*, lit. 'original concept'), 'i.e. God or the Universe invented [*erfunden hat*] man to be the expression of mind; art finds [*zufunden... hat*] him, and adapts his shape to the artistic embodiment of mind as concentrated in individual instances' [B].

4. ‘Because it represents the soul as independent of an appropriate body – the human soul as capable of existing in a beast’s body’ [B], and thus implicitly denies that the human body is a uniquely appropriate expression of spirit.

5. *Geistigkeit*: ‘ “The nature of thought, mind, or spirit”. It cannot here be rendered by mind or spirit, because these words make us think of an isolated individual, a mind or soul, and neglect the common spiritual or intellectual nature, which is referred to by the author’ [B], Hegel’s argument is this: Spirit must, in classical art, be represented as capable of full expression in a bodily form. Hence it must be a human mind, not ‘absolute and eternal’, since absolute and eternal mind or spirit can be expressed only as *Geistigkeit*, not in a bodily form. Hegel’s notion of *Geist* covers *both* those aspects of our mental life that can be adequately expressed in our bodies (without the use of at least sophisticated and abstract language) *and* those aspects that cannot: in pictorial religious terms, God the Father and the Holy Spirit, and, in philosophical terms, inner thoughts, and also the ideal, interpersonal structures shared by several human beings, such as language, culture and political institutions. Cf. section xcvi, nn. 2 and 3.

The main difficulty of this section is that Hegel leaves it unclear whether classical art portrays gods in human form (as the reference to ‘anthropomorphism’ implies) or men in human form (as the reference to migration of souls implies). (An additional difficulty is that, as Hegel was aware, Greek gods were often represented as taking the form of animals.) The answer is threefold:

(i) Classical art fully expresses the Idea in a sensory or natural form. The only natural object available for such

expression is the human body, since no other perceptible object has inner depth or meaning. Hence the Idea must be expressed in human form. (Hegel's suggestion that the human body is invented by the 'absolute notion' for this purpose seems to go beyond the limits of classical art, since it is unclear how a god in human form could himself invent that form.)

(ii) It is essential to classical, in contrast to symbolic and romantic, art that the inner nature of the world, and consequently the human minds that grasp it, lie close to the sensory surface of the world. Hence gods and men are the two poles of a symmetrical universe in which the inner nature of the world (gods) takes the same sensory form as, and is thoroughly transparent to, its highest phase (men). The human body is Janus-faced: it expresses both the spirit of the human being and the divine essence of the world.

(iii) In Hegel's own view (but not *explicitly* in the Greek view: cf. section cvri), human beings are not simply distinct from the Idea, but constitute its highest phase (cf. section [XLVII](#), n. 2). Hence to portray the Idea in human form is to portray gods, as well as men.

[cvii](#). The overall argument of this section is this: Art represents mind or spirit. But mind is 'absolute inwardness' and thus eludes sensory representation. More specifically, the essential feature of mind is to become conscious of things, especially of its own present state. Thus in Greek religion and art the 'unity of the human and divine nature' is only latent or implicit. The unity is conveyed by the bodily form common to gods and men, its latency by the fact that the god is seen as distinct from men, an 'essence and a power' over against them. In Christianity man becomes

aware of this unity and transforms it from 'an immediate to a conscious unity'. This 'self-conscious inward intelligence' can no longer be fully and adequately expressed in a sensory form. Thus romantic art treats sensory material much as symbolic art did – as a medium for an attempt to express what cannot be fully expressed in it. The difference is that the inner content of romanticism is not vague and underdeveloped, but fully developed, indeed overdeveloped in respect of its capacity for artistic expression.

1. The account, in this section, of romantic-Christian art differs from that given in sections [xcvi](#) and [xcviii](#). There he argued that Christianity, unlike symbolic religions, determines a uniquely appropriate sensory expression of itself, even if this expression, unlike that of Greek religion, does not represent its whole content. Here he argues that any sensory material is just as adequate, and just as inadequate, for its expression as any other, so that the form-content relation in romantic art is the same as that in symbolic art. There are several reasons for this equivocation:

(i) The notion of concreteness (lit. 'grown-togetherness') is sufficiently ambiguous to fit either view: to say that spirit or a content is concrete may mean (as here) that it is concrete within itself, or it may mean (as in sections [xcvi](#) and [xcvii](#)) that it grows together with the sensory, and spans the gulf between the Idea and the sensory. (Cf. section [ciii](#), n. 4.)

(ii) Hegel's emphasis differs according to whether he is contrasting romantic art primarily with Greek art (as here and in section xvi) or with symbolic art (as in sections [xcvi](#) and [ciii](#)).

(iii) In [xcvi](#) and [xcviii](#), he is thinking mainly of explicitly

religious, esp. medieval art, while here he is thinking of secular modern art. The disparity between medieval, religious art and modern, secular art – as well as that between earlier and later Greek art (cf. section xvn, n. 3) – favours the cyclical account of the decline of art suggested by Hegel later in his lectures, viz. that periods of artistic creativity are regularly followed by periods of artistic decline: ‘With the advance of civilization a time generally comes when art points beyond itself (Knox, *LA*, 1, p. 130). But this is plainly not what Hegel has in mind either here or elsewhere in his Introduction.

(iv) Correspondingly, in xcvi and XCVIII he has in mind Christian religion as such, while here he has in mind the philosophical meaning of Christianity. (The account of romanticism as mind becoming aware of its prior state fits the latter better than the former: see n. 6 below.)

2. ‘It is the essence of mind or thought not to have its parts outside one another. The so-called terms of a judgement are a good instance of parts in thought which are inward to each other’ [B]. Like Bosanquet, Knox (p. 79) argues that the ‘inwardness’ of spirit consists in the fact that thoughts (e.g. the terms of a judgement) or the parts of a mind are not outside one another in the way that the parts of a sensory object, such as a body, are, and hence spirit cannot be adequately expressed in a body. Hegel no doubt has this in mind, but it cannot be all that he means by ‘inwardness’, since this alone would not explain why inward thoughts etc. are inexpressible in art. A statue or painting *can* convey that a person is thinking, but not that he is thinking e.g. that beauty is truth. But this cannot be because the thoughts of beauty and of truth are internally related in a judgement, in a way in which sensory items (e.g. arms and legs) are not,

since the thought can be adequately expressed in the words 'Beauty is truth', which, as written marks or spoken sounds, are as externally related as arms and legs are. Hegel is more likely to mean that the deeper aspects of spirit, esp. thoughts but also feelings, have no obvious bodily manifestation (apart from speech). Moreover, thoughts are often not, like e.g. perception, directed on externally present, sensorily portrayable objects, so that a person's thoughts cannot be conveyed by e.g. painting him in an external setting: the 'inward mind... coalesces with its object' (cf. n. 10 below).

3. 'Compare Browning's *Old Pictures in Florence*' [B].

4. 'i.e. in the form of feeling and imagination – not reflected upon' [B]. But it is not clear that Hegel means to associate classical art especially with feeling and imagination. Feelings and imaginings, as well as thoughts, may be relatively 'inward' and difficult to express in a bodily form. Moreover, the romantic arts of music (section cxIII) and poetry (section cxiv) are associated respectively with feelings and with imagination. The crucial point is that the 'unity' is not reflected upon, and reflection involves thought. (See nn. 6 and 7 below.)

5. 'Subject, i.e. conscious individual person' [B].

6. Hegel often suggests that human beings or spirit develop by becoming conscious of, and thus transcending, their present state (see section c, n. a). His argument here is that just as, in becoming aware that one is an animal, one ceases to be (merely) an animal, so, in becoming aware that one has latent unity with God, one ceases to have merely latent unity with him and acquires explicit unity with him. It might be objected that the Greek artist does not lack awareness of our unity with God, but only cogitative, non-sensory

awareness of it; that he expresses his awareness in art rather than prose. Hegel's reply would be twofold: (i) Genuine unity cannot be conceived or expressed in sensory terms, since e.g. gods and men must be portrayed as having distinct, if similar, bodies; genuine unity can occur only at the level of the inner, and thus sensorily unrepresentable, mind, (ii) Sensory awareness is not capable of the reflection upon itself that the development of spirit requires: one cannot be sensorily aware, or sensorily express, that one is sensorily aware of one's unity with God; one can only non-sensorily *know* that one is sensorily aware of it, and *ipso facto* this knowledge has no obvious sensory embodiment. A difficulty with this argument is that, in the view that Hegel expresses elsewhere, our awareness of genuine unity with God is pictorially expressed by the God-man Christ, and is sensorily and non-contingently, though not fully and adequately, expressed in artistic portrayals of him. His neglect of this here relates to the problem discussed in n. 1 above.

7. *Innerlichkeit*: lit. 'inwardness'. Bosanquet's explicit association of romanticism with *intelligence* corresponds to his association of classicism with feeling and imagination (see n. 4 above). This depends in part on his mistaken view of inwardness, which he connects especially with judgements (see n. 2 above). But it has, in this section, considerable support from Hegel himself, since reflective self-awareness essentially involves thought.

8. 'Taken, considered as or determined to be negative' [B].

9. "'Inward", again, does not mean merely inside our heads, but having the character of spirit in that its parts are not external to one another. A judgement is thus "inward" '

[B]. But see n. 2 above.

10. ‘i.e. does not keep up a distinction between percipient and object, as between things in space. Goodness, nobleness, etc., are not felt to be other than or outside the mind’ [B]. Inwardness in this sense is plainly distinct from inwardness in the sense favoured by Bosanquet in nn. 2 and 9. The rest of this sentence makes clear that feeling, as well as thought, may be ‘inward’.

11. The romantic art form.

CVIII. **1.** Hegel thinks of the arts (architecture etc.), in contrast to the forms of art (symbolic etc.), as marking the transition from the universal ‘idea’ (*Begriff*) of beauty and its ‘particular’ forms to the ‘actual existence’ of works of art. There is no special justification for this, since the arts as such, like the art forms, are general types, not individual works. An individual statue is in actual existence; but why should we suppose that it is more closely related to the art of sculpture than to the classical art form, which it equally exemplifies? Hegel’s reason is that the arts, unlike the art forms, are defined primarily in terms of the sensuous material that they employ, and sensuous material is assumed to be closer to ‘actual existence’ than the art forms are. But in the following sections he does not define the arts exclusively, or even primarily, in terms of their material medium, and in any case the material media as discussed here are ‘general types’, not concrete pieces of matter. His association of the arts with actual existence, and hence with individual works, makes it easier for him to see the arts as the realm of ‘individuality’ (cf. section CII, n. 6).

2. ‘i.e. species, modifications naturally arising out of a

principle' [B].

3. 'Thus e.g. Sculpture is *the* art which corresponds *par excellence* to the general type called Classical Art; but there is a Symbolic kind of sculpture, and I suppose a Romantic or modern kind of sculpture, although neither of these types are exactly fitted to the capabilities of Sculpture' [B]. The association of the arts with 'actual existence' makes it easier for Hegel to see the art forms and the arts as intrinsically connected, rather than wholly independent classifications of individual works or as distinct particularizations of the 'idea' (*Begriff* or *Idee*) of art or beauty. For each art form, as Bosanquet notes, is associated especially (though not exclusively) with an art (or in the case of romanticism, with a group of arts). Hegel's argument for this is that, since 'art transfers into external existence the differences [viz. between the art forms] proper to the idea [*Idee*] of art', the 'species of art' [viz. the arts] contain the same 'essential modifications' as the 'general types of art' [viz. the art forms]. This argument confuses the individual work, which does transfer the differences of the idea of beauty into existence and must therefore predominantly exemplify one particular art form, with the art as such, and infers illegitimately that the art as a whole must be predominantly associated with a particular art form.

4. 'Architecture as relative to the purposes of life and religion' [B], but more specifically as a temple containing the statue of a god. See n. 5 below.

5. Hegel here presents three spheres of the 'world of actualized beauty', which he describes both in aesthetic terms (which connects them with the art forms) and in quasi-religious terms (which has the effect, in context, of linking

them with the arts):

(i) The centre of this world is the work that has ‘mastered the external elements of form and of medium’ (i.e. which is classical) and is ‘divine truth artistically represented’ (i.e. is a representation, primarily a statue, of a god).

(ii) One extreme to this is ‘devoid of mind’ (i.e. symbolic) and the ‘merely natural vesture of God’ (i.e. the temple housing the statue of the god). It has its ‘spiritual aim... in another’, i.e. its point is to house a statue.

(iii) The opposite extreme is the ‘divine as inward’, which suggests both the romantic art form and the less bodily arts of painting, music and poetry.

These three regions of art are analogous to three aspects of religion: region (ii) corresponds to (a) ‘earthly natural life in its finiteness’ region (i) to (b) God as ‘object’ and region (iii) to (c) the ‘devotion of the community’. Hegel here obscures a crucial disanalogy between art and religion. In art, the move from (i) to (iii) is, in Hegel’s dominant view, an aesthetic (though not a religious or philosophical) degeneration. In contrast, Hegel’s usual view is that the move from (b) to (c), their religious analogues, is an advance, from a god regarded as purely objective and separate from the believer to a god reunited with the worshipper by devotion and cult. But here, in order to make (b) analogous to (i), he describes (b) as a phase in which the ‘distinction of objectivity and subjectivity is done away’ – which makes it hard to see why (c) is needed to make God ‘living and present in the subjective consciousness’.

Apart from the fact that ‘art at its highest [i.e. Greek] stage is immediately connected’ with religion, Hegel’s reason for

linking art and religion so closely here is that it supplies a systematic account of why all five arts (or all three groups of arts), and at least approximations of all three art forms, are required: they provide respectively the enclosure of the god, the god himself (his statue), and the inner unification of the community with the god. It also implies a correlation between arts and art forms: e.g. architecture cannot fully express the Idea, since it merely encloses the (statue of the) god, and is thus symbolic rather than classical.

CIX. 1. This suggests a disanalogy between architecture and the phase of religion (phase (a) in section cvm, n. 5) to which it corresponds. For phase (a) involves 'earthly natural life in its finiteness', and is thus not especially 'cognate to mind'. But the analogy is partially restored by the fact that architecture employs only the 'forms of inorganic nature'.

2. *Bedeutung*: lit. 'meaning, significance'.

3. The more rich and determinate the conception of the Idea expressed by the art of a period, the more likely it is that architecture itself will attempt to express this conception and thus not require a statue to convey the full meaning. Thus classical, and still more romantic (esp. Gothic) architecture is more expressive than symbolic architecture. But it thereby oversteps the boundaries of architecture and approaches sculpture.

CX. 1. 'In the sense of "self-complete", "not primarily regarded as explained by anything outside", like a machine or an animal contrasted with a wheel or a limb, which latter are finite, because they demand explanation and supplementation from without, i.e. necessarily draw attention to their own limit' [B].

2. No feature of the statue is superfluous, failing to express some feature of the spiritual, and conversely no aspect of the spiritual content fails to be adequately expressed in the statue, remaining either unrepresented altogether or merely hinted at.

3. This may refer to polychromatic sculpture or Hegel may simply mean that the colour of a statue (e.g. white) is aesthetically significant, while that of a building is not. See n. 4 below.

4. 'i.e. shape taken simply as an object filling space' [B]. Hegel's claim is ill at ease with the words 'nor as indifferent to colour' (see n. 3 above), since they imply that colour plays a part in sculpture, but not in architecture. Many statues (and also buildings) have been polychromatic, and statues were, in Greece, painted – a practice of which Hegel disapproves and regards as peripheral to sculpture.

CXI. 1. Hegel's general view of God and the community that worships him is that God achieves self-knowledge or self-consciousness in the community, i.e. in man's knowledge of him. Thus God is not complete and fully formed independently of the world and of mankind; they constitute an essential phase of him. It is not, however, only explicitly religious belief and worship that play this role. All specifically human activity, i.e. activity requiring thought, both practical and cognitive – morality, politics, art, science, philosophy, etc. – play a part in what Hegel sometimes calls 'man's rise to God'. That human worship and other activities are themselves a phase – the highest phase – of God is, in Hegel's view, represented by the third person of the Trinity – the Holy Spirit – and is thus an intrinsic feature of Christianity, but not of earlier religions. (But Hegel's triad in

these sections – temple, god, community – is distinct from the Trinity – Father, Son, Spirit – and represents an attempt to integrate ancient and modern religions: it is only in their third terms – community and spirit – that the two triads converge.) Hence the art that embodies this phase is predominantly, though not exclusively, Christian. Since this art reflects our knowledge of God and God's knowledge of himself, it involves 'subjectivity', feelings, etc. to a greater degree than earlier phases of art. Since it portrays the 'community', i.e. not only religious belief and worship but also other human activities, it tends towards 'particularization' it portrays not, like sculpture, only the idealized human body, but the great variety of events and objects, both religious and secular, that are in some way connected with human affairs. The association of romantic art with the third term of the triad temple–god–community, rather than with the Trinity as a whole, thus tends to secularize its subject-matter. The effect of its association with the third term of both triads – community and spirit – is, contrary to Hegel's dominant view, to upgrade romantic art, in comparison with symbolic and classical art.

2. 'The terms used in the text explain themselves if we compare, e.g. a Teniers with a Greek statue, or again, say, a Turner with the same. "Subjectivity" means that the work of art appeals to our ordinary feelings, experiences, etc. Music and poetry are still stronger cases than painting, according to the theory. Poetry especially can deal with *everything*' [B].

3. 'The unity of the individuals forming a church or nation is not visible, but exists in common sentiments, purposes, etc., and in the recognition of their community' [B]. Cf. section xcvi, n. 2.

4. 'In expression constantly applied to consciousness, because it can look at itself. Cf.:

"Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?"

"No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself
But by reflection, by some other things."

Julius Caesar" [B].

Hegel does not here use the words *Reflexion* or *reflektieren* ('to reflect'), but *Gegenschein*, lit. 'counter-appearance'. God becomes aware of himself not directly and immediately, but by being reflected back off his community. Bosanquet's 'reflected appearance' is preferable to Knox's 'mirror-image' (p. 86), which suggests, contrary to Hegel's intention, exact reproduction.

5. 'Posited or laid down to be ideal; almost = pronounced or made *to be* in the sense of *not being*; e.g. musical sound is "ideal" as existing, *qua* work of art, in memory only, the moment in which it is actually heard being fugitive; a picture [is ideal], in respect of the third dimension, which has to be read into it; and poetry is almost wholly ideal, i.e. uses hardly any sensuous element, but appeals almost entirely to what exists *in the mind*. "Subdivided", *besondert*, like *particularisirt* above: because of the variety and diversity present in the mere material of colours, musical sounds, and ideas' [B]. 'Ideal' in this sense (*ideell*) is distinct from 'ideal' in the sense in which art presents the ideal (*ideal* and, as a noun, *das Ideal*); e.g. classical sculpture is, in Hegel's view, *ideal*, but it is not, in comparison with music or poetry, especially *ideell*.

6. It is unclear whether Hegel means that the romantic media have a 'closer intimacy' with their import or meaning (*Bedeutung*) than architecture and sculpture have with their own meaning, or that they have a closer intimacy with their *spiritual* meaning than architecture and sculpture have, or could have, with a similarly spiritual meaning. At all events, this attempt to upgrade the romantic arts is qualified in the next sentence.

7. 'Again, the subject of a Turner or Teniers is not objectively universal, in the simplest sense; not something that is actually and literally the same everywhere and for everyone. And both painting and music (immediately sensuous elements) are less completely amalgamated with the ideal, represent it less solidly and thoroughly than the statue, so far as the ideal is itself external or plastic' [B]. The apparent discrepancy between this sentence and the preceding one (see n. 6 above) depends on two distinctions that Hegel does not adequately draw:

(i) The content or meaning of a work may be either the absolute Idea or the theme of the work. Painting may express the theme more adequately than sculpture, but not necessarily the absolute Idea. The theme may or may not be 'universal', while the Idea is essentially universal.

(ii) The 'sensuous medium' (*sinnliches Material*) is distinct from the 'immediately sensuous element' (*das unmittelbar Sinnliche*). The former is 'set down as ideal' and interpreted, e.g. painting with the third dimension read into it, words heard as meaningful, etc.; the latter is not interpreted, not at least in the same way, e.g. the sheer sound of words, two-dimensional patches of colour, etc. The close intimacy, in romantic art, of the meaning with the former is purchased at

the cost of its amalgamation with the latter.

8. 'The greater affinity of Romantic art with the movement and variety of the modern spirit displays itself not only in the greater flexibility of painting, music, or poetry, as compared with architecture and sculpture, but in the fact that the Romantic type contains these three arts at least, while the Symbolic and Classical types had only one art each' [B]. Given the triadic character of Hegel's thought, it is something of an embarrassment for him that there are at least five major arts, rather than three. He resolves the difficulty by regarding painting, music and poetry as a totality (within the wider totality of all the arts), i.e. an intimately interconnected whole, whose parts perform complementary, interlocking functions. In sections [CXIV](#) and [CXV](#), he tends to see poetry not simply as one romantic art among others, but as the universal art, which is equally at home in all three art forms.

[CXIII](#). **1.** 'This is drawn from Goethe's doctrine of colour, which Hegel unfortunately adopted in opposition to Newton's theory' [B]. Cf.

2. 'He means landscape, principally' [B].

CXIII. 1. On sound and music in general, see Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*, the second part of his *Encyclopaedia*, §§ 300–302, and also Part III of Hegel's *Aesthetics*.

2. *aufhebt*, from *aufheben*: 'used pregnantly by Hegel to mean both "cancel", "annul", and "preserve", "fix in mind", "idealize". The use of this word is a cardinal point of his dialectic... I know of no equivalent but "put by", provincial Scotch "put past". The negation of space is an attribute of music. The parts of a chord are no more in space than are the parts of a judgement. Hegel expresses this by saying that music idealizes space and concentrates it into a point' [B]. Since Bosanquet's time, many renderings of *aufheben* have been suggested. The most common is 'sublate', coined from the irregular past participle, *sublatus*, of the Latin verb *tollere*, which has a similar ambiguity ('raise up, elevate' and 'uproot, destroy').

3. 'The parts of space, though external to each other, are not distinguished by qualitative peculiarities' [B].

4. *Negativität*, not *aufheben* or *Aufhebung* ('sublation').

5. *Aufheben*.

6. 'The distinctively material attribute of a sonorous body, its extension, only appears in its sound indirectly, or inferentially, by modifying the nature of the sound. It is, therefore, "idealized" ' [B].

7. 'Succession in time is a degree more "ideal" than co-existence in space, because it exists solely in the medium of memory' [B]. See my 'Kant and Hegel on Space and Time',

in *Hegel's Critique of Kant*, ed. S. Priest (Oxford, 1987).

8. 'Seele: mind on its individual side, as a particular feeling subject. Geist is rather mind as the common nature of intelligence. Thus in feeling and self-feeling, mind is said to concentrate itself into a soul' [B].

9. Hegel's reason for placing music at the 'centre' of the romantic arts is that music dispenses with the spatiality essential to painting, but retains temporality, while poetry also dispenses with temporality – in the sense explained in the next section. (Painting makes no essential use of temporality, but since time is, in Hegel's view, more ideal than space, music is, even so, more ideal than painting.) The comparison of music with architecture was common at the time. Hegel endorses the dictum that architecture is 'frozen music', and attributes it to F. Schlegel (Knox, *LA*, II, p. 662). Schelling also referred to architecture as 'music in space... solidified music' (*The Philosophy of Art*, p. 165).

CXIV. 1. On sign, word and language, see Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, the third part of his *Encyclopaedia*, §§ 458–60. The sign (*Zeichen*) by itself is void of import or meaning, in that the sound 'dog' has no intrinsic similarity or other relationship to dogs, except in virtue of its being used as a sign for dogs. By contrast, in Hegel's usage, a symbol (*Symbol*), e.g. a picture of a dog or of a bone, has some intrinsic relationship to dogs prior to its use as a symbol.

2. *Vorstellung*: see n. 6 below and also section XLVI, n. 2.

3. The 'negative point', which for Hegel represents the non-spatiality of music, now becomes concrete and generates the 'infinite space of its ideas [*Vorstellung*]'. But 'space' seems an equally appropriate metaphor for music, especially in view

of its kinship with architecture.

4. *Zeichen*: lit. 'sign', not *Symbol*. See n. 1 above.

5. 'Hegel seems to accept this view. Was he insensible to sound in poetry? Some very grotesque verses of his, preserved in his biography [Karl Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben* (Berlin, 1844)], go to show that his ear was not sensitive. Yet his critical estimate of poetry is usually just. Shakespeare and Sophocles were probably his favourites. And, as a matter of proportion, what he here says is true. It must be remembered that the beauty of sound in poetry is to a great extent indirect, being supplied by the passion or emotion which the ideas symbolized by the sounds arouse. The beauty of poetical sound in itself is very likely less than often supposed. It must have the capacity for receiving passionate expression; but that is not the same as the sensuous beauty of a note or a colour. If the words used in a noble poem were divested of all meaning, they would lose much, though not all, of the beauty of their sound' [B].

6. *Vorstellung*, not *Einbildung(skraft)* or *Phantasie*. *Vorstellung* primarily means 'representation, idea, conception, the capacity of 'representation, ideas, conception'. But, as the next section shows, 'imagination' adequately represents what Hegel has in mind here. (Knox, pp. 89, 90, also translates it as 'imagination'.) But see section [CXV](#), n. 6.

7. Poetry is the universal art in that, since it involves the 'imagination' common to all arts and art forms and a minimal attachment to 'external sensuous matter', it represents the highest common factor of all the arts. Hegel implies here, and more explicitly in the following section, that poetry is less restricted in its themes than other arts are, and can adequately portray the themes associated with the

symbolic and classical, as well as the romantic, art forms. See section [CXV](#), n. 6. That the particularization of a universal concept should conclude with an item that is *both* particular *and* universal, and thus represents a return to universality out of particularity, is a characteristic feature of Hegel's thought. So too is the suggestion that when something reaches its highest phase and is thus most fully itself, it tends to veer over into its opposite and cease to be what it was.

8. *Vorstellung*. Cf. n. 6 above.

[CXV](#). 1. Crystallization is discussed in Hegel's *philosophy of Nature*, §315. In [CXV]. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, VII A.c. and B.a., he speaks of the 'crystals of the pyramids', and the comparison recurs in the *Aesthetics* (Knox, *LA*, II, p. 653). The comparison refers to the shape rather than the process of formation, since, in Hegel's view, crystallization, unlike architecture, is relatively independent of gravitational force.

2. Although Hegel has considered the sensuous media of the arts and their relationship to space and time, his classification of the arts is derived primarily from the art forms.

3. *Momente*: 'Hegel's technical phrase for the stages which form the essential parts or factors of any idea. They make their appearance successively, but the earlier are implied and retained in the later' [B].

4. The classical art form treats architecture as 'inorganic nature'.

5. 'Adequate, and so of permanent value' [B]. But it is not obvious that Hegel means that the inadequacy of e.g. Greek and Roman painting as a vehicle for classical 'content', and

its inferiority to romantic painting, entail that the paintings are not of *permanent* value. Hegel excludes classical poetry from this reproach, since classical poetry is not surpassed by romantic poetry. This is one reason why he regards poetry as the ‘universal art’.

6. *Phantasie*, ‘fancy’, not *Vorstellung*. As in section [CXIV](#) (see n. 6), poetry is not only a romantic art, especially suitable for representing inner feelings etc., but the universal art involved in every art form. This view may be plausible for other reasons, such as the greater flexibility of language as a medium, but Hegel’s argument for it is not compelling. All arts involve *Phantasie*, and although poetry does not, like the other arts, employ a definite ‘sensuous medium’, poetry is not *Phantasie* alone, but *Phantasie* expressed in words, rather than in paint or stone. Why then is poetry special? Hegel perhaps exploits the ambiguity of *Vorstellung* (see section [CXIV](#), n. 6): (i) Of all the arts poetry alone strictly presents *Vorstellungen* in the sense of ‘ideas’, since ideas can be signified only by words. Thus (ii) poetry, of all the arts, is especially, if not exclusively, associated with *Vorstellung* in the sense of ‘imagination’, and hence with *Phantasie*. Proposition (i) is open to question, and it does not entail proposition (ii).

7. A ‘Pantheon’ is literally a temple to ‘all the divinities’ (of a given religious system). Thus Hegel’s idea is that the three art forms constitute a complete system, or ‘totality’, of (metaphorical) divinities –the ‘Idea [*Idee*] of beauty’. This totality is realized or actualized in a Pantheon of individual works of art by the particular arts overseen by the ‘spirit of beauty’. Hegel’s claim that the completion of this Pantheon *will* take ‘ages’ (*Jahrtausende*: lit. ‘thousands of years’) is often taken to indicate that he does not believe that art is at,

or nearing, its end. But it need not indicate this. Although he uses the future tense, he may mean not that the Pantheon will be completed some millenia after the date of his lectures (AD 1828–9), but some millenia after the beginning of the history of art (c. 2000 BC) at which he is in imagination placing himself. (If a historian, writing in 1992, says ‘It will be two years before Napoleon becomes Emperor’, he means not ‘two years after the actual present, 1992’, but ‘two years after the historical present, 1802, at which I imaginatively place myself.’) At the end of the *Lectures on Aesthetics*, a different metaphor suggests that this is what Hegel means and thus that his claim here is compatible with the view that art is at an end: ‘Now at the end we have arranged every essential category of the beautiful and every essential form of art into a philosophical garland’ (Knox, *LA*, II, p. 1236). There is no suggestion that the ‘garland’ (or the ‘Pantheon’) still awaits completion or that some ‘essential category’ or ‘form of art’ still lacks realization in actual works of art. The implication, if any, is rather that art has come to an end, since the garland or Pantheon is finished and there is nothing left for art to do.

Notes

1. See F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, tr. D. W. Stott (Minneapolis, 1989), p. 10. Schelling is comparing his own age with that of Albrecht Dürer, Raphael, Cervantes, Calderón and Shakespeare.
2. See section [XCIII](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.
3. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, p. 10: 'When such a fortunate age of pure production has passed, reflection enters, and with it an element of estrangement. What was earlier living spirit is now transmitted theory.' For Hegel, see e.g. section [XVIII](#) of his *Introduction*.
4. On the history of aesthetics, see B. Bosanquet, *A History of Aesthetic*, 2nd edn (London, 1904) and K. E. Gilbert and H. Kuhn, *A History of Esthetic*, 2nd edn (London, 1956).
5. See section 1, n. 1, of my Commentary. For a defence of the view that Baumgarten contributed more to aesthetics than its name, see 'The "Aesthetica" of Baumgarten' in Benedetto Croce, *Philosophy. Poetry. History: An Anthology of Essays*, tr. C. Sprigge (London, 1966), pp. 427–50.
6. See Hegel's account of Kant's theory in sections [LXXVII](#)–[LXXXII](#) of his *Introduction* and my notes on them.
7. *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, originally published in *Die Horen*, 1795–6.
8. See section [LXXXIII](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.
9. See section [LXXXVI](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.

10. Translated by D. W. Stott as *The Philosophy of Art*.
11. *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline* was published in 1817 and, with successive revisions and additions, in 1827, 1830 and (posthumously) 1840-45. The main translations of the three parts are: I. *Hegel's Logic*, tr. W. Wallace, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1975); II. *The Philosophy of Nature*, tr. A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1970) and by M.J. Petry (London, 1970); III. *The Philosophy of Mind*, tr. W. Wallace and A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1971).
12. *Hegel and the Human Spirit: A Translation of the Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit (1805-6)*, tr. L. Rauch (Detroit, 1983). The triad of art (or poetry), religion (or mythology) and philosophy (or prose), as three different ways in which man expresses his experience, appeared earlier in Vico's *Principles of a New Science of the Common Nature of Peoples* (1725). Vico argued that they appear successively in history, and each forms the basis of a distinct type of society. (Hegel nowhere mentions Vico, however.)
13. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. A. V. Miller (Oxford, 1977). This was originally intended as an introduction to Hegel's system.
14. *The Science of Logic*, tr. A. V. Miller (London, 196g).
15. See Hegel's *Introduction*, section cv.
16. See section [xcvi](#), nn. 2 and 3, in my Commentary.
17. See section [cxi](#) n. 4, in my Commentary.
18. *Begriff*. Bosanquet often renders this as 'idea', 'notion' or

‘conception’. See also section [XL](#), n. 3, in my Commentary.

19. *Idee*. Bosanquet sometimes renders this as ‘idea’. See also section [xxxvi](#), n. 5, in my Commentary.

20. See sections LXXVII and LXXX of Hegel’s *Introduction*, and my notes.

21. Hegel’s central use of the words ‘true’ (*wahr*) and ‘truth’ (*Wahrheit*) is to mark the fact that something realizes its concept and is thus an Idea, e.g. a true state is a state that realizes or lives up to the concept of the state, in contrast to an underdeveloped or deformed state. But since any finite entity, such as a state, is subject to imperfection and eventual destruction, Hegel is also inclined to say that only God, the absolute, or the universe as a whole is strictly true. See also section LXXIII, n. 5, in my Commentary.

22. Time, in Hegel’s view, presupposes the existence of finite entities: finite entities come into being and perish, and this gives rise to time. Hence nature has no beginning *in time*. It does not follow that nature had no beginning, since we might say that nature, and therefore time as well, began e.g. ten million years ago. But Hegel has no clear view on this question.

23. Hegel also has no clear answer to the questions when and how man emerged. His doctrine that only events of which we possess a written historical record constitute history excludes these questions from the subject-matter of the historian. He discusses and rejects various fanciful accounts in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction: Reason in History*, tr. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge,

1975).

24. See section cxv of Hegel's *Introduction*.

25. When 'classical' Greek art is contrasted with 'archaic' (and with 'Hellenistic') art, it refers to the art produced in Greece between 480 and 323 BC, i.e. from the end of the Persian war to the death of Alexander. Hegel uses 'classical' in a wider sense, in which almost all Greek art is classical, though 'classical', like 'symbolic' and 'romantic', refers primarily to a type of style which may occur at any period. 'Romantic' is also ambiguous, referring firstly to the general type of art in the Christian era as a whole, and secondly to the Romantic movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

26. See section XLVII, n. 2, in my Commentary.

27. See section [XIV](#), n. 4, in my Commentary. Characters in modern drama, especially Shakespeare, are, in Hegel's view, more strongly individualized than those in Greek drama. This reflects the more markedly individualistic and secular nature of modern man.

28. See sections [CVII](#), n. 5, and [CXI](#), n. 1, in my Commentary.

29. See sections [C](#) and [CI](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.

30. See esp. section [CIII](#), n. 4, in my Commentary.

31. *Inhalt*. Hegel uses this word to refer both to the theme of a work of art (e.g. the anger of Achilles) and to its deeper meaning (e.g. the Homeric world-view). When he says that

art has the same content as philosophy, he is using ‘content’ in the latter sense.

32. Hegel does not (like Schelling and Heidegger) doubt that philosophy can in principle express its meaning adequately, and does not need to be supplemented by e.g. art or mystical experience. This is because he believes (i) that conceptual thoughts are ultimately what art and religion *mean* and that to ask for *their* meaning is like asking for the meaning of a meaning; (ii) that all thoughts and meanings can in principle be expressed in prosaic, conceptual language; and (iii) that conceptual thought cannot assign limits to itself, and coherently suppose that there are problems it cannot solve or realms beyond its comprehension.

33. See sections [xvi](#), n. 4; [xvii](#), n. 3; and esp. CVII, n. 1, in my Commentary.

34. See section [xvii](#) of Hegel’s *Introduction*.

35. Hegel develops this line of thought in *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1975), I, pp. 602ff. (‘The End of the Romantic Form of Art’), and, in connection with Friedrich Schlegel and the Romantic circle, in sections LXXXVI–XCI of his *Introduction*.

36. See esp. section LXXXVII of his *Introduction*.

37. See sections [xxxiv](#) and [lxxxvi](#) of Hegel’s *Introduction*.

38. This exemplifies Hegel’s belief that if subjectivity is sufficiently intensified it coincides with objectivity.

39. See section [XCI](#) of his *Introduction*.
40. See esp. Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1952), pp. 101-3.
41. See esp. sections [LXXI](#)-[LXXV](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*, on the overcoming of opposition or antithesis.
42. Hegel tackles this problem in his *Encyclopaedia*, §13. See *Hegel's Logic*, pp. 18-19.
43. See esp. sections [XCIV](#)-[CXV](#) of Hegel's *Introduction*.
44. See section [cxv](#), n. 7, in my Commentary.
45. Religion differs from art and philosophy in that its continuance *essentially* requires only continuing belief and practice, not innovation. (This does not entail that belief and practice can be maintained *without* innovation.)
46. See esp. Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*.
47. Knox, *LA*, 1, p. 103.
48. It might be objected that if art were to regain the position it held in Greece, this would involve a decline in humanity's conceptual and, therefore, spiritual powers. But Hegel has no right to exclude such a (not unprecedented) decline, or even the possibility that humanity's future creations will resist the categories of 'conceptual', 'sensuous', etc. In fact, it has often been suggested that Hegel's own philosophy has a strongly aesthetic dimension and, in intention at least, a unity comparable to that of a work of

art. If that is so, it may be one of those creations that resist classification as philosophy rather than art.

*I attempt to disentangle some of these complexities in my *Hegel Dictionary* (Oxford, 1992).